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THE ARYAN PATH

Point out the "Way" — however dimly, and lost among the host — as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.
—The Voice of the Silence

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"THUS HAVE I HEARD"—

Our knowledge is the amassed thought and experience of innumerable minds: our language, our science, our religion, our opinions, our fancies, we inherited. Our country, customs, laws, our ambitions, and our notions of fit and fair,—all these we never made; we found them ready-made; we but quote them.
—EMERSON

People are always talking about originality; but what do they mean? As soon as we are born, the world begins to work upon us; and this goes on to the end. And after all, what can we call our own, except energy, strength, and will? If I could give an account of all that I owe to great predecessors and contemporaries, there would be but a small balance in my favour.—GOETHE

"Originality" is prized and honoured by our civilization. But are we not overlooking what many thinkers, some of them profound, have asserted—that nothing is said, written, or imagined, that has not been anticipated by men in the past? Man has been called an imitative creature. He walks in the paths trodden by others. Even those who are famous as original thinkers or writers have, often unconsciously to themselves, "stolen" ideas from others. Literature is full of "coincidences" which some call plagiarism—the pilfering of another person's "brain property." But is there any writer who is not a plagiarist in some sense? Is there a book but is the shadow of another volume? Is there *anything* that is not the reflection of something that exists somewhere, in some form, in the infinitudes of space?

Emerson's essay on "Quotation and Originality" offers very important truths; they will lead sincere and earnest minds to a "new" line of thought. Emerson writes:—

By necessity, by proclivity, and by delight, we all quote. We quote not only books and proverbs, but arts, sciences, religion, customs, and laws; nay, we quote temples and houses, tables and chairs, by imitation. The Patent Office Commissioner knows that all machines in use have been invented and re-invented over and over; that

the mariner's compass, the boat, the pendulum, glass, movable types, the kaleidoscope, the railway, the power-loom, etc., have been many times found and lost, from Egypt, China, and Pompeii down....

The highest statement of new philosophy complacently caps itself with some prophetic maxim from the oldest learning....

If we confine ourselves to literature, 'tis easy to see that the debt is immense to past thought. None escapes it. The originals are not original. There is imitation, model and suggestion, to the very archangels, if we knew their history. The first book tyrannizes over the second. Read Tasso, and you think of Virgil; read Virgil, and you think of Homer; and Milton forces you to reflect how narrow are the limits of human invention. The "Paradise Lost" had never existed but for these precursors; and if we find in India or Arabia a book out of our horizon of thought and tradition, we are soon taught by new researches in its native country to discover its foregoers, and its latent, but real connection with our own Bibles.

How do our thoughts and images emerge in our own consciousness? How do they come from others? How is it that our ideas and inventions which we value as "original" can be traced to older roots—that in reality they are but reflections of what men before us have thought, maybe æons ago?

One aspect of the invisible counterpart of the visible universe is a picture gallery, a library wherein are to be found our ideas and images, our phantasies and fancies. It has its higher phase or aspect, Nature's Noble Archives, the Æther-Akasha of the ancients. The archetypal Ideas shine in Akasha and radiate their reflections, from within and above, in a denser medium called the Astral Light by the European mystics such as the Rosicrucians, the Fire-Philosophers, etc. Paracelsus, Boehme, St. Martin and others were familiar with the truth of its existence and its influence on humankind.

Professor H. H. Price of Oxford University has written of the concept of a third realm intermediate between mind and matter as having

long been familiar in the philosophy and cosmology of the Far East; and something not unlike it is found in Neo-Platonism....Perhaps if we reject it out of hand...we are merely being parochial.

His "ether of images," "like matter in being extended, and yet like mind in that it retains in itself the *residua* of past experiences" is obviously none other than the Astral Light.

Our memory in the present is related to this sphere in more than one way. From it come the "bolts from the blue," the sudden flashes of premonition and hunches. The Akasha is the Divine Astral, and its lower and gross counterpart also absorbs and retains our thoughts and images. Says H. P. Blavatsky:—

Occultism teaches that no form can

be given to anything, either by nature or by man, whose ideal type does not already exist on the subjective plane. More than this; that no such form or shape can possibly enter man's consciousness, or evolve in his imagination, which does not exist in prototype, at least as an approximation.

Men of today need to recognize their "vast mental indebtedness," not only to the knowledge and experience of the ancients, but also to Living Nature. Goethe had the humility and the insight to admit his indebtedness to many :—

> What would remain to me if this art of appropriation were derogatory to genius? Every one of my writings has been furnished to me by a thousand different persons, a thousand things: wise and foolish have brought me, without suspecting it, the offering of their thoughts, faculties, and experience. My work is an aggregation of beings taken from the whole of nature; it bears the name of Goethe.

Applying rightly a thought one finds in a book need not imply the mental inferiority of the borrower. "Only an inventor knows how to borrow." True talent, a Sage has said, "will become original in the very act of engaging itself with the ideas of others." Shakespeare is a classic example. The plots, the characters and the major part of the incidents of his plays he borrowed from others, yet he is considered to be "more original than his originals." He transformed the dross of previous *novella* into the gold that shines in his dramas and carries the hallmark of his originality. "The bees pillage the flowers here and there, but they make honey of them which is all their own," says Montaigne. The *Dhammapada* exhorts us to be like them :—

> The bee gathers honey without injuring the scent or the colour of the flower. So should a silent one (Muni) live his life. (Verse 49)

Let us then take all knowledge to be our sphere, for truth is the monopoly of no individual. What does matter? Great Ideas, noble Truths and true Sentiments. These are immortal. Their source, their authorship, is of passing interest. The long line of Sages and Seers, rightly described as Lords of Meditation, have been the mediators between the Divine Archetypal Ideas and the human creators who use Their Wisdom-Light.

SHRAVAKA

THE FORCE WITHOUT A NAME

[There is hope in this article, despite the hideous cruelty and the cheating of nature which **Mr. Roy Bridger** describes. For he brings out that, despite the movement of the human race along all the roads to mass suicide, increasing numbers are moving in the opposite direction, towards a harmonious relationship with Nature. Mr. Bridger's article reminds us of a remark of H. P. Blavatsky: "The occult powers of plants, animals, and minerals magically sympathize with the 'superior' natures, and the divine soul of man is in perfect intelligence with these 'inferior' ones. But during the barren periods, the latter lose their magic sympathy, and the spiritual sight of the majority of mankind is so blinded as to lose every notion of the superior powers of its own divine spirit. We are in a barren period." The cycle has run its course; a new one of disenchantment and rebuilding is about to begin. As "the force without a name" gains momentum, as "the idea of an unbroken cycle of health in soil, plant, animal and man" wins more and more adherents, the present barren period will give place to a fertile one.—ED.]

In his recent book, *The Path through Penguin City,* Dr. Harry R. Lillie, formerly surgeon to an Antarctic whaling fleet, quotes "Grey Owl" as observing:—

> Kindness to animals is the hallmark of human advancement; when it appears, nearly everything else can be taken for granted.

Dr. Lillie himself is possessed of intense sympathy and respect for all wild life, and it is probably no coincidence that he is correspondingly lacking in sympathy for all those manifestations of ugliness and irresponsibility which in modern times suggest that mankind has ceased to advance at all. This book is not another saga of adventure in distant waters; whaling and sealing, the author discovered, are "largely sagas of brutality." The tremendous increase in the killing of whales consequent on Svend Foyn's inventing of the explosive harpoon in 1865 is at last beginning to arouse public concern, but the frightful cruelty involved has not hitherto been appreciated. Dr. Lillie, who has devoted himself to a search for more humane apparatus for use in such dealings with the whale people as we must have, leaves no doubt how things stand at present:—

> Could we imagine a horse having two or three explosive spears driven into its stomach, then made to drag a heavy butcher's truck through the streets of one of our cities while it poured blood over the roadway, until it finally collapsed an hour or more later; then we would have a slight idea of what a whale goes through.

The author is equally eloquent on sealing (he saw men, in too much of a hurry to kill first, rip the bodies of baby seals from their coveted woolly white coats) and on the trapping of fur-bearing animals for human fashion advancement in

far-off cities where no questions are asked. But what makes this book even more notable is the exceptional range of problems Dr. Lillie relates to his own special theme. Soil erosion, deforestation and the creation of deserts are knowledgeably discussed. (In fact the view that agriculture and forestry should be integrated is only recently gaining ground.) A powerful paragraph begins with organic husbandry and goes on to nature cure and anti-vivisection:—

In breaking Nature's law that we borrow only what we put back we have been guilty of deplorable ingratitude: instead of returning our treated excreta and our dead bodies to the soil from which we came, to fertilise it for future life, we have tried to settle our debt with artificial chemicals. Science responds too by spraying our orchards and crops in gay abandon with these concocted chemicals to kill what we call harmful insects and weeds, while the birds and the bees are killed too, to pave the way for fresh and worse troubles. We have an unreasoning fear of Nature's normal bacteria instead of a more than justifiable fear of ourselves. We spray our food and the human body itself inside and out with the same chemical horrors, and the latest antibiotics, wonder why our half dead entrails cannot get rid of the poisons of this daily misuse, then talk of resulting disease as something that needs vast moneys and our fellow animals to be expended in laboratory research to find out the cause of it.

To Dr. Lillie the crowded populations of the big cities appear to be scrambling for existence like trees in a densely packed forest; growth is narrowed and each individual can see only the little bit of light immediately above it. People are always in a hurry, as if impelled by the fear of some great catastrophe. Is it only through the wrecking of these centres by war, pestilence and famine that mankind can get back to basic essentials, and must we force all other life as well to breathe in radioactive dust? Or can these horrors be averted by making radical changes in mankind's way of life? In which case, can enlightenment come through United Nations, whose concrete and steel skyscraper headquarters are themselves wedged in the thick of the rush and turmoil? Or to how many will it come in the way it did to a trapper mentioned in this book, of whom it is related that he saw everything with new eyes from the moment when a trapped beaver stood up clutching the trap and looking steadily up at him? Indoor folk and outdoor travel different roads, but the truth waiting ahead is the same for all.

Scientists today are much given to using radioisotopes as "tracers" to probe the workings of various physical and chemical processes. How fascinating it would be if the exact path of ideas could be similarly traced out! Twenty years ago it would not have been possible to include most of the supporting arguments now incorporated in this

book. Soil erosion is no new development, but before 1935, when was published Paul B. Sear's *Deserts on the March*, it was not talked about. *The Rape of the Earth*, by G. V. Jacks and R. O. Whyte followed in 1939. Hugh Bennett's *Soil Erosion* was published in the U.S.A. in 1946, and the subject then passed into general currency.

Tree-planting, too, is no recent activity, but the tracers marking the course of thought in this direction in the particular form and context of today would probably run side by side with the soil-erosion literature. The Men of the Trees Society, founded by Richard St. Barbe Baker in 1924, has played no little part in developing opinion, especially within the last two decades. With Baker's *Sahara Challenge* (1954) the two lines converge.

The progress of an idea, however, is not simply from one important book to another. The significance of a work is not always realized at the time; it may take a later and more vigorous contribution to carry in its sweep such pioneer publications as have been held up. F. H. King's *Farmers of Forty Centuries*, a description of Chinese peasant agriculture, first appeared in 1926, but it was not until Sir Albert Howard had returned to England from India and settled down to putting composting on the Western map that King's survey of small-scale, intensive methods in China was recognized as a classic. It would need a huge supply of tracers to mark the course of the "cycle of life" idea through the minds of countless individuals all over the world since then.

The organic idea as formulated by Sir Albert Howard also carried to flood-tide the earlier work of McCarrison and others on the quality factor in food-stuffs and on dietetic balance. In 1910 Funk had surmised that vitamins existed; two years later Gowland Hopkins gave full results of vitamin experiments of which preliminary reports had appeared in 1906. By 1918 Sir Robert McCarrison, a medical officer in Indian service, had reached his main conclusions as to the constituents needed in an ideal diet to build up stamina and to give protection from disease. It was too soon; the idea got stuck. But twenty years later Dr. J. T. Wrench, who had been impressed by McCarrison's findings, discussed them in his book *The Wheel of Health*. For the first time attention was focused on the link between nutrition and soil fertility. By the following year the Cheshire Panel Committee, persuaded that medicine itself must foster the new and revolutionary ideas, held a meeting in Crewe Town Hall in which was launched their well-known *Medical Testament*. That meeting of March 22, 1939, proved to be historic in the progress of the health idea, not its least memorable feature being the appearance on the same platform of the two pioneers whose

work forms the pillars of the movement—Sir Albert Howard and Sir Robert McCarrison.

So much interest was aroused by the publication of the *Medical Testament* in pamphlet form that the Committee decided to issue a journal in which the communications received were embodied. The editorship was entrusted to the enthusiastic hands of Dr. Lionel J. Picton, and the first issue of the *News Letter on Compost* appeared in October 1941. A modest eight pages, it contained six letters, including one from Lady Eve Balfour, who later became well known as the author of *The Living Soil* (1944) and as organizing secretary of the Soil Association.

With the publication of the bulky thirteenth issue in October 1945 Dr. Picton relinquished the editorship, and devoted himself to the preparation of his book *Thoughts on Feeding* (1946), a leisurely, good-humoured stocktaking by a very sincere man. Responsibility for handling the large quantity of material arriving from all parts of the world was taken over by Sir Albert Howard, whose infectious assurance, iron determination and tireless attention to detail inspired the new journal *Soil and Health* up to the time of his death in October 1947.

Quite a multitude of tracers are now in evidence, and at this point it must be remembered that not everything claiming to be a genuine idea is admissible. One of the many formidable problems arising from the rapid increase in the world's population is that all the new arrivals have to busy themselves at something or other, and in a desperate effort to secure a niche many do not hesitate to claim value for useless work and counterfeit ideas, especially such ideas as can be styled "scientific." But *only one real scientist exists—Nature. If our ideas do not fall in line with Nature's they are counterfeit.* If Sir Albert Howard had formed a company to patent the Indore Process and to market compost, it would have been necessary to examine the credentials of his ideas with the greatest caution. His intentions did not run on these lines in the least, but the powerful group of industrialists associated with the manufacture of chemical fertilizers are not so disinterested. Every possible argument with a shred of superficial plausibility is employed to fan to white heat the case for factory-made fertilizers—and insecticides to "control" the rush of pests inevitably arising from attempts to farm on lines not approved by Nature. In most practical gardening journals the organic idea has more or less taken over, but the farming press is under tremendous pressure from industrial groups with something to advertise whether chemicals to eliminate organic wastes or new machines to eliminate more men.

In one direction at least, the organic way of life and the mech-

anistic way of life are running parallel. The Petersen family of Copenhagen has for years been designing machinery to compost organic refuse, culminating in the new Dano Bio-Stabilizer, which can incorporate sewage as well. Speaking recently in Edinburgh on the occasion of the opening of the first Dano plant in Britain, Mr. Finn Petersen said his late father's main object was to co-operate with nature by mechanization.

From the beginning the organic movement has called for the return of all sewage and organic refuse to the land. But the most ardent enthusiast would shrink from having to turn several thousand tons of town wastes at least three times. The new machine smiles at the idea; it keeps on turning them continuously for five days, at the end of which period of sustained fermentation the essentials of composting are completed. To the Swiss, with their fervour for tidiness and hygiene, went the honours of installing the first publicly operated Dano plant outside Denmark, and the process is now well established in many countries. Thus the progress of an idea has received impetus from an improvement in mechanical technique, and in July 1955 an international conference held at Zurich was able to establish an International Compost Working Party to further the interests of municipal composting on a world-wide scale.

The most painful birth in the world has been that of human reasoning. Few of man's problems have caused his ideas to spin so wildly as that of the disposal of his dead body. I should not like to suggest that they will eventually settle down to the completely utilitarian level of burying the dead in municipal compost drums, though with the ever-increasing pressure on land surface and the consequent difficulties of finding suitable ground for cemeteries, no one knows what the force of circumstances will produce. Probably the most acceptable compromise between rationalism and sentiment would be burial within the clearings of forests, thus integrating burial customs with a long-term agro-sylvo-pastoral rotation.

The idea of an unbroken cycle of health in soil, plant, animal and man, with its emphasis on correct environment as the basis of individual disease resistance, has in its later stages encountered and joined forces with the powerful nature-cure movement. Four hundred years ago, Paracelsus was pointing out that those who merely study and treat the effects of disease are like persons who imagine they can drive the winter away by brushing the snow from the door. Anything more obvious could scarcely be imagined; yet for centuries human health has been made to hinge on the fantastic activities of what is somewhat euphemistically described as "medical science," still fighting desperately to preserve the latest variations of symptom-suppression,

one of the most utterly bankrupt ideas remaining in circulation. With the mingling of the waters from so many sources the new outlook on health has today taken on the characteristics of the lower Amazon. But nothing whatever has been contributed by orthodox medicine, up to the neck in the dead-monkey trade, sponsoring useless and cruel experiments on living animals at the rate of two and a half millions annually in Britain alone, and now staking everything on the bombardment of diseased tissues with radio-isotopes by remote control. It is difficult to estimate the extent to which medicine has become the pawn of the drug houses, or to gauge the real influences at work in the passing and consolidating of one of the most repressive pieces of legislation in modern times—compulsory national health insurance. It is not the peasants of the world who are behind the H-bomb. It is not those working for the protection of Nature who insist on the perfection of guided missiles. Until 1948 medicine had some chance of enlisting with enlightenment, but with the passing of the National Insurance Act it fell back into sinister alliance with all that is destructive in modern human activity.

Thus organic husbandry (including forestry) is seen to be closely connected with nutrition; the method of disposal of the dead, with the state of health of the living; and the environmental sciences, with nature cure. What, it may next be asked, is nature cure without Nature? A large number of plant, insect and animal species have been classed by one authority or another as indispensable, not simply to man's health, but to his very existence. *In fact, neither man nor his health can be considered at all in isolation.* Man as a separate entity can have no existence; knock away his supporting props, and out goes the creature with the fanciful ideas about the "conquest of Nature."

Such considerations must, I think, broaden still further the conception of wholeness already amplified by the organic husbandry movement. As our control (as distinct from conquest) of Nature penetrates into those kingdoms which she has hitherto been running herself, it is becoming clearer that former land utilization divisions are too limited. The distinction between domestic animals and wild life will break down. A situation is approaching in which farm land, forests, national parks and nature reserves will merge within a single command. In the meantime the work of organizations such as the Fauna Preservation Society and the International Union for the Protection of Nature must be recognized as now forming part of the indivisible idea structure under examination.

In the building of this structure so far, the national culture machine has played little part. Newspaper headlines are for the most part given over to the heady abstractions

of politics, particularly military politics. Official policy approves the doctrine of the super-force to quell all lesser forces, and no appreciable *organized* counter-doctrine has appeared. Yet the assertion that the continued stock-piling of atomic weapons will act as a deterrent, rounding off eventually into universal peace, is to an increasing number of people utterly untenable.

Sir Albert Howard once remarked: "Nature will always beat politics." To me that seems probably the most profound observation he ever made, though I might also word it: "Politics can never beat Nature." *In the last resort Nature, as farmer, as scientist, as thinker and as opponent, holds all the trumps.* Man has made a move—the contriving of modern civilization. Nature has countered by laying him by the heels by the million. What will be his next move? Whose will be the victory? It has been suggested that it may be possible to construct an electronic computer capable of evaluating military situations and of determining the best move at any stage. There is also that kind of machine visualized in *1984*, every component part of which is a human being, and by the perfection of which the State would be enabled to beat every operator other than itself. No mechanical device, however clever, can find us a winning move against something which cannot be beaten, but Nature has propounded no problem so baffling that the human computer cannot solve it, with diligence and with faith.

There are many roads to mass suicide, and the human race is advancing along all of them. Whether that advance can be stemmed depends supremely on the continued progress of thought in biological politics. To some salvation may appear to rest in a change-over to organic husbandry and whole foods; to others the doctrine of natural healing may seem the most urgent. The scientifically-minded will travel the high road of ecology; the less aspiring will be content with the byways of bird-watching. Organic movement, health movement, nature preservation, peace front—all are separately developed parts of a tremendous whole, a new kind of consciousness, a force unparalleled in its potentialities, organized and eloquent on some sectors, reaching out on others to things which are beyond words, and itself as yet unformulated and without a name.

ROY BRIDGER

THE FLOWERING OF COMPASSION

THE BUDDHA AND THE BODHISATTVA TRADITION

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The Buddha did not attain his Supreme Wisdom in a day. An ordinary mortal had to practise spiritual discipline for æons to become a Bodhisattva. The Bodhisattva in his turn had to practise austerities for a long, long time to become a Buddha.

For the benefit of the world, for the welfare of all sentient beings, for countless births, he sacrificed his flesh and the body of flesh as well, in the practice of austerities.[1]

When and where did he begin these austerities?

Thousands of years ago in this very sacred land of Bharata, the Buddha began his spiritual discipline. At a prehistoric, primitive day, there lived in India a saint who was a humble householder. The crops of his fields, the milk of his cows and the fruits of his little garden were the means of his meagre livelihood. This simple soul, who dwelt in the realm of Spirit, was quite satisfied with this. For the first time in the world he sang a hymn on "Friendliness," which he felt for all beings:—

May all creatures look upon me with the eye of a friend, for I look upon all creatures with the eye of a friend.[2]

Years rolled on, and centuries may have passed before the same saint was born again in a cottage in this ancient land. He had a plot of farm land, a few cattle and a small garden. With his own hand he tilled the soil and cared for the cattle.

One of his cows gave birth to a calf. How affectionately and carefully she nursed it! She watched over it attentively lest some one might tease or hurt it. The saint observed her motherly concern and found it sweet. All of a sudden, the Universal Love which he had attained several centuries before, as a result of his great austerities, stirred

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[1] "*Pamsupradanavadana*" (a chapter of the *Asokavadana*, which is to be shortly published from Visva-Bharati).

[2] *Shukla-Yājurveda*, xxxvi. 18.

to consciousness in him. This love for all sentient beings was now more intense than before in his heart. He sang :—

Like-heartedness, like-mindedness, non-hostility do I create for you; do ye show affection, one toward the other, as does the cow toward her new-born.[3]

With the loving heart of a mother, this Bodhisattva embraced all creatures; even the sinful, the degraded and the polluted. He inspired all his followers to do the same :—

O ye Brahmanas, again raise the fallen, uplift the oppressed, purify the polluted, give new life to the sinner who is dying of sin.[4]

In his subsequent birth, this saint made further progress in the divine life, when he treated the whole world of sentient beings as his own infant son :—

I cook food, I serve it and my wife is my helper in this holy work. The universe is born unto us—as our own baby son. We now begin a still higher life.[5]

In this holy land of Bharata, the Bodhisattva marched on and on towards his goal and was born at last as Prince Siddhartha in the town of Kapilavastu. Indeed that was a day of great rejoicing for mankind. It was the full-moon day of Vaishakha and the baby prince was as lovely as the moon. All who looked upon him were charmed.

Asita, the greatest sage of that time, came to know in his meditation that the Bodhisattva was born again and that this was his last birth. Asita left his hermitage and came to the King's palace to see this extraordinary baby. When he saw the boy, who bore the auspicious marks of a Buddha, his eyes filled with tears, and King Shuddhodana, noticing that the aloof sage was moved, trembled for fear of losing the child. The sage consoled him and cheered him thus:—

Have no fear of being bereaved of the child. He will live long, it is true, but I myself will not live long enough to hear him preach the Good Law. Therefore I am sad. Knowest thou, O king, that the Law he shall preach will flow like a stream of clear water? Sentient beings everywhere in the world will quench their thirst with the unfailing waters of this river.[6]

What the sage had foreseen came to pass exactly.

On the bank of the river Niranjana, in the hermitage sacred to the memory of the great sage Gaya, he began to practise his final austerities. He conquered by his spiritual force both desire and death. Mara, the embodiment of these two, lay vanquished at his feet. Then he knew completely all that was to be known and stood revealed as the Buddha before the world. He had attained the greatest tranquillity, even as a fire that has consumed all

[3] *Atharvaveda*, III. 30. 1
[4] *Ibid.*, IV. 13. 1
[5] *Ibid.*, XII. 3. 47
[6] *Buddhacarita*, I. 54-75

its fuel.[7]

It was on the full-moon day of Vaishakha that he attained this fullness, a fullness like that of the moon. The thought came to him: "I have now reached the best Path, the Path by which the sages of old arrived at the highest truth."

He attained this state during the last watch of the night and, at that time, the movable and the immovable alike became motionless. The world seemed to be free from violence. All appeared to have attained fulfilment along with him.

Enjoying the bliss of attainment, he stayed seated in that blessed spot for seven days. Then the determination arose in him to preach the message of love and peace to the world.[8]

The Universal Love of which he had had glimpses, thousands of years before, which he had cherished in his heart later through innumerable births and deaths, attained its fulfilment in the last birth of the Enlightened One. It was so taught:—

As a mother protects her only son even at the risk of her own life, so one should enlarge his heart infinitely with compassion for all sentient beings.[9]

Like a mother he looked with love and compassion after the poor, the miserable, the destitute and others like them. Like a father he protected them all. Those who were tired of fighting and killing found solace for their bleeding hearts in the ambrosia of his affection. He soothed them:—

All fear punishment even as you fear punishment. The life of others is as dear to them as your life is to you. Therefore do not strike anyone nor slay nor cause to be slain.[10]

As I am, so are these creatures. As are these creatures so I am. Thus having identified himself with others, let him not kill or order the killing of others.[11]

When, after his Enlightenment, Siddhartha entered the town of Kapilavastu, Yashodhara told her son, "Yonder is your father. Go to him and claim your inheritance." The simple boy went to the Buddha and did as he was bid. The Buddha handed the begging bowl to him. All who saw it wept. That was indeed the best inheritance the son could expect from the father. The boy left the world and followed his father. So did the queen mother.

In every province of India, the following verse was chanted:—

Anger must be conquered by the absence of anger, evil by good, a miser by charity and the liar by truth.[12]

The method of overcoming men

[7] *Ibid.*, XIV.
[8] *Ibid.*, XIV.
[9] *Sutta-Nipata*, I. 8. 7
[10] *Dhammapada*, X. 2
[11] *Sutta-Nipata*, III. 11. 27
[12] *Dhammapada*, XVII. 3

was completely changed. Not by weapons but by love, not by hatred but by compassion, not by taking life but by sacrificing one's own life, was victory to be won.

Angulimala, a robber who had killed hundreds of human beings and made his part of the country a desert, who was cruelty incarnate, was conquered by the Buddha, as he was about to kill his own mother. The robber became a saint in the Buddha's holy company. The Shakiyans and the Koliyans, at the point of going to war with each other, were pledged to peace by his holy influence.

Having glorified the different places of India by his sacred presence for years, the Blessed One at last passed away at Kusinara. He was eighty years old. That also was the day of the full-moon of Vaishakha. The sky, the earth and the air were flooded with soothing moonlight. On just such a night, Gautama was born; on just such a night he realized the Infinite; and now he lay under the arching sky in final rest, in a beautiful grove of *Shala* trees. The Buddha selected this as the suitable place for his *Mahaparinirvana*. Under the shade of a pair of *Shala* trees that blossomed out of season, Gautama lay down.[13] While the sky glowed with the light of the moon and the trees flowered, his shining body with his radiant head moved and was still.

When, at the point of death, he enquired if anyone had any questions to ask, his numerous disciples kept silent. None of them had any questions. The Blessed One had already set them free from all their doubts. They had all seen the truth. What else could they ask?

The last words he spoke were: "Decay is inherent in all compound things; strive for your salvation with diligence."

Before death he entered into the Final Ecstasy. Ananda, the intimate disciple who had followed him like a shadow for years, broke out in grief, "Brother Anuruddha, has the Blessed One passed away?" Anuruddha replied, "Ananda, the Blessed One has not yet passed away. He has entered into the ecstasy called the *Sajna-vedita-nirodha*.[14]

Thus passing from trance to trance, he finally yielded his body at the setting of the moon.

The Blessed One was no more in this world. But the Good Law of Universal Love that he preached filled the vacancy created by his departure. It inspired even the men in the street to strive for a higher life. The Bodhisattvas were born in succession in every part of India. The Venerable Upagupta, who was known to be the Buddha-

[13] *Dighanikaya* (Pali Texts Society), Vol. II, p. 156

[14] The only difference between death and this state is that in the latter the heat of the body is not lost, the life does not cease to be and the sense organs are not destroyed, while in the former, all these are destroyed.

without-the-auspicious-marks, initiated Ashoka, the greatest emperor of the world. Through his enterprise the Good Law was spread all over the world. His own life too had undergone a great change. The powerful king who had vanquished kingdom after kingdom conquered his own desire for triumph. For the sake of the Good Law, for the welfare of all sentient beings, for the uplift of the common people, he gave up everything he possessed. Ashoka thus offered his last prayer before his death :—

I crave not for the kingdom of heaven,
I hanker no more for the kingdom of the world
which is as stable as the hurrying water
of a flooded stream.
May the merit which has resulted from my charities
make me the supreme lord of a mind endowed with devotion !
Give me the treasure of the realm of spirit,
treasure that is never consumed nor stolen !

(*Asokavadana*)

Even after the death of Ashoka, the Good Law continued to flourish. Numberless Bodhisattvas were born in this vast continent. They devoted their lives to the service of the poor, the miserable, the sick and the destitute. To protect the weak from the oppression of the powerful, they sacrificed themselves. The Bodhisattva Supushpachandra was put to death. The executioners, in accordance with the king's order, hacked his body limb from limb, and plucked out his eyes with a pair of red-hot tongs. He endured all these tortures, forgave all who tortured him and died silently.[15]

The scriptures record :—

They are not overcome by pain even when their bodies are torn to pieces. Even then they pour out love for all sentient beings of the universe. They endure all this pain for the liberation of those who inflict it on them.[16]

When the Bodhisattva Aryadeva was stabbed and at the point of death, he asked the murderer to take his robe and begging bowl in order to disguise himself as a monk and escape.[17]

Such is the Universal Love of the Bodhisattvas. Another among them remarked :—

I felt an equal and unfailing friendship for those who came to slay me, those who offered me poison, those who flung me into the fire, those who ordered me trampled upon by the elephants and those who sent serpents to strike me. I did not wish in my thoughts for any misfortune to come to anyone.[18]

To remove the misery of all sentient beings, these Bodhisattvas were prepared to sacrifice all their comforts, their very lives and even their liberation :—

May I become the objects of their various enjoyments to the countless creatures of the countless worlds in the universe; until all of them attain

[15] *Maitrisadhana*, p. 60
[16] *Siksasamuccaya*, Ch. IX; *Maitrisadhana*, pp. 18–19
[17] *Santidever Bodhicaryavatara*, p. 78
[18] *Maitrisadhana*, p. 19

liberation.[19]

I shall stay behind in this world till the very end of it, in order to remove the suffering of even one individual.[20]

I do not want *Mukti* for myself alone, forsaking these afflicted unfortunates.[21]

I do not desire the highest state which is endowed with the eight supernatural psychic powers. Nor do I desire liberation. I desire (to take on myself) the suffering, penury and miseries of others; I shall stay behind until the last creature of the universe attains to liberation. I desire to be born again and again in this way, willingly having taken on the sufferings of all creatures to make them happy.[22]

What else can attract those who have drunk deep of the nectar of love? Celestial pleasures, even the bliss of liberation, become insignificant to them:—

All-sufficing is the contentment, the peace, the endless overflowing joy which is experienced when sufferers are set free step by step, from the bondage of pain. Of what avail, then is dry-as-dust liberation?[23]

From prehistoric days till now the Bodhisattvas have been born again and again on this earth into a world of sorrow. Only yesterday, the greatest Bodhisattva of the modern world, an embodiment of non-violence and friendliness, sacrificed his own life for the cause of suffering humanity.

And even today, there is one who travels on foot across the land, begging from door to door so that he may give food and shelter to the starving and shelterless destitutes of India. The whole world is attracted to this wonderful *Anathapindada*[24] of the present era. Humanity offers its homage to this holy man.

SUJITKUMAR MUKHOPADHYAYA

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[19] *Bodhicaryavatara*, III. 21; *Maitrisadhana*, p. 24

[20] *Maitrisadhana*, p. 62

[21] *Bhagavata Purana*, VII. 9. 44; *Maitrisadhana*, p. 21

[22] *Bhagavata Purana*, IX. 21. 12; *Maitrisadhana*, p. 64

[23] *Bodhicaryavatara*, VIII. 108; *Maitrisadhana*, p. 62

[24] *Anathapindada* means "he who feeds the destitute.' It is the name of a famous disciple of the Buddha.

AN EXPENSE OF GRADUATES

[In this article **Miss Elizabeth Cross** holds the mirror up to Western civilization today at a revealing angle. She is understandably shocked by the Western world's dedication to spreading its industry-and-commerce-keyed civilization in other parts of the world. This not disinterested attitude is properly resented by many in India and other Eastern countries. Not a few, however, while resenting the givers' attitude are prepared to take their paste-and-tinsel gifts—not only gadgets and notions but also, alas, a materialistic attitude to life.—ED.]

"An expense of Graduates, in a waste of time, Is Commerce in action..." with due apologies to Shakespeare who said something rather similar about lust.[1] These Graduates...how they haunt me every time I pick up a newspaper and glance through the "Appointments Vacant" column! But you don't need to glance; the labour situation seems so acute that the advertisements come out and hit you in the face, begging you to accept a comfortable new house, maximum wages and a minimum of work if you will only come and be a minute cog in some anonymous wheel.

But why Graduates, why such a demand for the very specially educated? I can understand that certain jobs do necessitate that their holders be able to read and write Basic English and be able to add, or to use a slide rule. Certain other jobs need high technical ability and training, fair enough. But what are these desirable Graduates being asked to do? Ay, there's the rub, because only too often it is just precisely no more than the foreman is doing already.

The sweet girl Graduates seem to be wasting their time even more than the men—they are, it appears, busily engaged on what is known as Consumer Research. Ah well! Research—that's a word to conjure with, isn't it? Shades of sainted Madame Curie and her gifts to humanity, and the many devoted but less-known workers in the raw material of history! But when you get yourself stuck into the office you find Consumer Research isn't quite —well, it just isn't quite—not even when you're doing it for the B.B.C. It takes a pretty clever Graduate to find a good reason for caring twopence whether Mrs. Jones listens to the Bongy Brothers Band or whether she prefers the Caterwaulers. In the same way, no one but the manufacturers could be interested in the fact that Mrs. Brown uses "Splash" to wash her smalls, but sometimes she uses "Splosh." She doesn't care much, although her Aunt Em says "Splash" brings her out in spots quicker than "Splosh" does, but

[1] Sonnet 129: "The expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action..."

her Cousin Louisa says "Splosh" is much worse if you have a sore finger. And the thoughtful Graduates write up beautiful, well-organized reports, full of long words and nice little columns of figures to show the Average Housewife and the Not-so-average Housewife and the Lower-income-bracket Housewife and the Upper-income-bracket Housewife and Uncle Tom Cobley and All, and we hope the employers are satisfied. I hope, too, that the Graduates aren't; because although we know that all labour is honourable, yet surely some kinds are a good deal more honourable than others (much as Orwell's Animals were all equal, but some were more equal than others).

Once upon a time Mothers and Fathers and Teachers, when viewing the growing child, would wonder what he or she would grow up to be. Many fathers and mothers had very firm ideas on the subject: they had already decided that Tom would fulfil their own ambitions and become an eminent doctor or whatever it was that had eluded them! Teachers could afford to be a bit more impartial. They took a keen interest in the children they were working for, but they recognized in a very short time just what qualities of brain, physique and character were present. We all know those old school reports: "Could do better if he tried..." "Lacks interest..." "A steady worker," and so on. These trite phrases really mean something when you are in the classroom; we see the boy with plenty of intelligence who just doesn't care about method or effort —we couldn't trust him with a job on his own. We see others, less gifted, the plodders, the trustworthy ones who will always do their best regardless of supervision. We see the kind-hearted, the cold, the lively, the dull, the ones who have a pleasant general interest in all around and the few others who have a special bent which they will follow without encouragement or even in spite of setbacks. We wonder what they will make of their lives—we are interested to know what their work will be.

Once upon a time we had pretty good ideas. John, if he could manage some of the preliminary grind, would make as good a doctor as his Uncle ...better perhaps, because he had a steadier nature. Mary, careful, methodical, practical but with sufficient brains, would make a good nurse, where another girl would find the job harder yet end up a Sister Tutor owing to her superior mentality. There were dozens of worthwhile sensible things for our children to do, farming, carpentering, dressmaking, all things that needed doing. We had them at the back of our mind as we helped these children with their daily jobs, their necessary practice in the three R's, their widening interests in the world of the past that we called History, and the great world of the present that was termed Geography. As the children progressed we opened as

many doors of knowledge as we could, of art and music, poetry, sculpture and architecture—there was no knowing what spark might not be quickened. We were delighted when our children went on to the universities—we voted ourselves for and presented pupils with half-holidays and picnics in honour of the brave occasions.

The girls too. We fought for them like demons, especially against those reactionaries who kept saying, "What's the good of spending all this time and money educating girls? They'll only get married and then it will all be wasted." As if education could be wasted! For wasn't it the great gift, the development of the self, the chance to realize your potentialities? Education wasn't just a ticket you needed to get a good job, it was part of your personality, incapable of being lost or wasted. You were going to become a better person, the whole world was going to take on a finer aspect for you—and so on, until the critics retired, not convinced but exhausted.

But now, what do we teachers find happening to our best and brightest? Are they receiving more and more of our precious education? Are they getting the coveted years at college? And after that our precious Graduates—are they spreading the light, as teachers, administrators, writers, philosophers, priests, missionaries and all the rest of the old-fashioned idealists? Well, they are getting "education" all right—years of it, all free and with allowances for their wives if the boys happen to marry in college. The Graduate population has gone up very considerably and still doesn't fill the demand. We ought to be pleased with our efforts except that some of us are beginning to have an uneasy feeling that however hard we work bringing our pitchers from the well we're never going to get the big water pots filled. Yes, there's a leak somewhere. Our wonderful products of education are disappearing down the drain, and I think it's the drain of Big Business—including Nationalized Big Business today.

Hundreds of carefully educated young people are doing unworthy, senseless and often downright harmful jobs. The fact that more and more machines are being used to help them in these jobs is irrelevant, for too many people are having to take care of these machines, and although there is a great deal of satisfaction in taking care of a horse that is working for you there's no mutual fun to be had with a Comptometer!

Trouble to read the advertisements for workers and you will begin to grasp the ghastly boredom of modern civilization. Then read the advertisements for "consumer goods": the patent nail files you must have, the deodorants, the car mascots, special lotions for this and that, and see how many are completely unessential; and then reflect that hundreds of thousands of human beings are busy making

these bits of nonsense, hundreds more busy selling them and more still using them to no good purpose. *Then think that the Western world is dedicated to spreading this civilization!* It's so horrifying that you don't feel a few super-bombs are going to destroy much that is worth while.

Finally, from the educational point of view this waste of Graduates reminds me strongly of a very popular comic recitation entitled "Albert and the Lion." This tells the story of a small boy, Albert, who is taken to the Zoo by his loving parents. Somehow Albert annoys the lion (I believe he pokes at him with his stick with the horse's-'ead handle) and the lion very properly eats up the lad. Later, at the inquest, the Coroner sympathizes with the mother, and hopes that she will have other children to replace Albert. Mother then retorts, "To feed ruddy lions? Not me!" And so I wonder, as I coax my bright and dim ones along the pleasant paths of learning, is it to feed ruddy lions?

ELIZABETH CROSS

EASTERN AND WESTERN PSYCHOLOGY

The condescending approach of Western psychology to the wisdom of the ancient East is rarely so frankly expressed as by the Swiss psychologist Carl Gustav Jung and his interpreter, Dr. Josef Goldbrunner. The latter remarks in his recently translated study of Jung's depth psychology (*Individuation*) that "in the course of a search lasting thousands of years, the East attained knowledge of the inner world, coupled with a childlike ignorance of the external world." He contrasts to this Jung's picture of the fortunate West :—

> We on the other hand will investigate the psyche and its depths, supported by a tremendously extensive historical and scientific knowledge.

A science of psychology, Jung claimed, was being built up which gave a key to things to which the East had "found entrance only through abnormal psychic conditions." He claims to have been, in his technique, "unconsciously led along that secret way which for centuries has been the pre-occupation of the best minds of the East."

Dr. Goldbrunner's description of *Nirvana* as escaping from all opposites and looking into a consciousness devoid of figures and sense impressions reveals a sadly inadequate understanding of Indian thought.

Jung's professed admiration for "the great Eastern philosophers" is inconsistent with his assertion—verily a two-edged sword—that "every statement about the metaphysical...is invariably a laughable presumption on the part of the human mind, unconscious of its limitations." This out-presumes the "presumption" he derides, as surely as it must bar the door to the fully illuminated regions of Eastern knowledge and even to realizing in a small degree the extent of its range and depth.

E.M.H.

MEANS AND ENDS

[**Shri J. M. Ganguli**'s difficulty in conceiving an Inner Self, higher than the lower level of consciousness on which the average man today commonly functions, will not be shared by those to whom the opposition of one part of Man's nature to his higher promptings seems all too patent. As Emerson in his superb essay on "The Over-Soul" wrote, "I the imperfect adore my own Perfect." But Shri Ganguli's prescription for attaining detachment by concentrating on the Present is of positive value. It may, however, be asked, in terms of Shri Ganguli's title, whether detachment is properly an end. Is it not rather a means to a higher end? For it is written, "...the more thy Soul unites with that which Is, the more thou wilt become Compassion Absolute."—ED.]

"Your sorrow and misery start from lack of self-knowledge." "This is an illusive world. Liberate yourself from its *maya*." "The soul, disturbed by the activity of the mind, is petrified." Mental activity is of two kinds according to some, of five kinds according to others. "The split in the psyche is due to a fall into duality"; "through no-thing and through self-emptying you find everything." "The Kingdom of Heaven is within." "Right knowledge, right attitude, right conduct—these pave the way to salvation." "*Nirvana* comes through meditation." "The Atman is *nirvikar* (unmodifiable)." "The soul is a bundle of elements or forces and a stream of thought." "The world is merely an idea or thought." "Destroy your ego-centred mind." "Surrender yourself, your all and everything, to Him."

To whomsoever I go, to whatever side I turn and in any book that I open, one or another of these or similar sayings or utterances comes rattling and buzzes into the ear. When I put them down on paper in rows and columns in order to understand them, I fail to arrange and connect them into a whole which may have some meaning. It becomes a cross-word jumble. As in a moving picture, one after another they slide across my mental screen, leaving me in the dark where I was though with greater fatigue and uncertainty than before.

Lack of self-knowledge? But what can self-knowledge be if I do not know what my self is? "It is your inner self," but that I understand as little as the outer. If there is a Self which is different from what I take it to be, how am I to find it? How is the inner self related to the outer, and can the two be separated? How has the discovery of the inner self ever been made by the outer one? But is it not the rule, and our experience too, that things known or to be known are external to the knowing one? It is not the externals which discover the inner knowing one, for they do not really exist without a knowing consciousness, without a conscious agency to perceive and realize them. Anything

that comes to be known by such consciousness can only be outside and external to it and cannot be subtler and inner to itself. Consciousness cannot be divisible into two kinds or conditions, into inner and outer; and therefore Self also cannot be two, one inner and one outer, if Self means consciousness, that which perceives and realizes. It is nothing but seeking consolation to say, when one is dissatisfied with oneself, that there is another, an inner and a truer Self. Consciousness cannot now be in what has been called my external self and then slip into another which has been called my inner Self. It is not displaceable and it is untransferable and very obviously so, too. Introducing the idea of outer and inner selves is to split my conscious self into two, which is not possible and which is meaningless and which brings in duality, into which I am warned not to fall. "The split in the psyche is due to a fall into duality."

Fall into duality?—Does not that saying itself imply an acceptance of duality? In fact whoever warns me against it is himself too conscious of it, for he realizes me as distinct from himself. Every theory, every idea, every kind of consciousness itself has the duality sense embedded in it. Inner and outer, within or without, above or below, whether it is the psyche, the self, the Heaven or anything else, and even the idea of Atman, *Nirvana* or God—they are all involved in duality. By itself consciousness is nothing; there must be something to be conscious of. Something is needed to excite it. It is not any realization of the non-existence of duality which makes one turn away from it, but rather a sense of dissatisfaction with the environment which is not under the mind's control, though it makes the mind work and causes different feelings and perceptions in it. In disgust and disappointment the mind at times wants to ignore the environment and the externals and then it says to itself that all is unreal and is only my own projection on my imagination, is my idle play-creature.

Another reason that has inclined thoughtful minds to a rejection of duality is the extreme difficulty of explaining it by any theological hypothesis. Two separate objective realities will imply two creations and two creators, two fundamental Causes, one behind each. In all such efforts it is an imaginary goal which is held up, without the means to attain it being shown by anyone. And the means, if any, will spoil the whole case also, because the means as distinguished from the end will establish duality beyond doubt.

The underlying urge in such seekings and searchings after what is called the Truth, the Absolute, *Nirvana, Mukti* or Eternal Bliss, is really towards an escape from the torments and sufferings which constitute life, sparkled though it be by occasional hilarious impulses and ecstatic feelings. Every inevitable lapse after some moments of intoxi-

cation makes that urge stronger and so the search for ways of escape becomes impatient and variously directed. Wild and agitated cries then come, shouting injunctions and sermons, do's and don't's, prayers and appeals. In such agitation ideas are naturally mixed up, and theories telescoped one into another. Things of common knowledge and experience are belittled and those which cannot be obtained are idolized: "This world is an illusion." "This mind is egoistic and must be killed." "Sorrows are unreal." "Your true Self is not what you suppose yourself to be." "Leave this all and proceed Heavenward" —and so on—a whole string of them comes, vibrating and echoing from all sides. Just preaching, wishful thinking, imaginative picturing, without laying down the means, ways and manner of reaching and attaining the end in view.

"Atman is *nirvikar,*" but since knowing is a *vikar* (modification), Atman cannot then know, feel or realize anything. Also, being *nirvikar,* can Atman cause *vikar* in anything? If Atman and my consciousness, which I know to be my Self, are different things how are they related? For they must be related; otherwise Atman is of no significance to me, to my Self. If they are related does one evolve from the other; and if so which from which? But my Self being *vikar*-ful and the Atman being *nirvikar* how can there be any link between them? Moreover, what am I really asked to do? To convert or to merge my Self into the Atman? But how can *vikar* be turned into *nirvikar,* consciousness into non-consciousness? If non-consciousness means destruction of consciousness, then consciousness cannot destroy itself, as indeed nothing can destroy itself. Destruction of a thing is only possible by something external to it.

I am also told: "Destroy your ego-centred mind," but am not told by what means. And who is to do it, "I"? Is it not my mind which thinks, feels and differentiates this "I" from the rest? "I," then, is its own creation and within the fold of its consciousness, and therefore that "I" cannot destroy the very consciousness in which it exists.

"Surrender yourself to Him." "*Bhakti* (devotion) and faith are easier roads to Bliss or *Mukti.*" But surrender to Whom? I am supposed to have left duality behind, but here is a picture of a Him held before me. I am warned not to hang on to the egoistic mind, but are not faith and *bhakti* feelings of the mind, and is not the mind's consciousness essential for any realization of Him?

I am thus left in the midst of a tremendous stretch of inconsistencies where I can see no light, no way. My mind cannot analyze its own activity into two, five or more kinds. I cannot perceive the soul getting disturbed and petrified by

my mind, because I cannot make out what soul means or signifies by itself apart from my mental consciousness, in which all things can be said to originate and exist. I cannot say what *nirvikar* or *Nirvana* is, for "knowing" itself is a *vikar*, and consciousness and *Nirvana* are irreconcilable opposites. It is no use seeking a Heaven whereto I cannot fly, because my feet are grounded in the sticky soil of the Present. What good in chafing and fretting and wishfully thinking of doing the impossible or of attaining the unreal? I thereby only get the more perplexed, and instead of finding an escape from my woes, sorrows, troubles and worries I go the other way and get involved in greater suspense and uncertainties, into thicker darkness and more worrying confusion.

When I sit down thus to reflect I feel like discarding the theological shibboleths and metaphysical aphorisms, and clearing out of the forest of sayings and maxims, by which men at different times have tried to dodge the Present and divert their minds away from it, to a soothing distance, to a realm where hopes and fancies are not to be questioned, where postulates and assertions are not accountable to reasoning, where impossibles and inconsistencies never fight shy.

Yes, indeed, each one of such sayings and utterances has been the outcome of individual looking, individual understanding and individual wishful thinking. Their very inconsistencies prove that; and therefore they are not to be just accepted on blind faith, and one's individuality should not be crushed into conformity with them. The idea of thirty-three crores of gods has a significance which is not considered when it is ridiculed. It implies that our innumerable varieties of experiences, our various reactions to the diverse influences to which we are susceptible, lead to different ways of thinking, wishing, constructing and supposing; and such thoughts, constructions and suppositions are transfixed on to one or another god-symbol of an individual's creative imagination. Concentration on any such symbol according to one's natural inclination, with ardent love and outpouring devotion, can well be helpful for mental control and steadiness. Impelling and goading the mind, however, to adopt and to follow strictly the chalk mark left by someone else may be harmful and choking to the evolving realization.

When I get lost in the wilderness of all that I am told, I sit down and try to disentangle myself. I reflect and ponder on what I want and ask myself for what my quest can be. I relax my mental strain for a time and watch the soft murmuring ripples dancing down the stream by the meadow bank on which I am sitting. How easily, how playfully, how happily they surge up and down, regretting nothing of the past and wishing nothing for the future.

Every pulse that comes and vibrates them they receive with grace and good humour, and on that they concentrate with the playfulness of a child and the grimness of a *yogi*. But I lack their steadiness. My mind is diving into the past that is gone beyond recovery, in quest of some treasure that I had once grasped or some fragrance that had once effervesced, some colour which has faded; and sometimes I fancifully probe the future and paint and frame pictures of hopes and flirtatious desires. And all this to what gain, to what purpose? I can neither salvage what is sunk in the past nor reach out to things which do not yet exist for me and are beyond my power and jurisdiction. Those little sparkling ripples strike me hard and leave me doubtful and thoughtful. They are not looking back ruefully with any burning hankering to the majestic, snowy heights from whence they have trickled down, or to the roses that had blushed in the valley and radiated love and beauty.

Can I not do the same? Can I not dance on in the light and freshness of the Present without looking backward into the shadow behind or straining my eyes to the beyond, to scratch white and black lines on an imaginary horizon? I reflect and ponder, and begin to resolve, dissect and analyze my pains, sorrows and cravings as well as hopes, joys and excitements—all of which rock me in my quietness, in my retreat to undirected thinking, in my meditation on the Infinite where my "I" gets lost and forgotten.

I had loved a house and had spent so much time in decorating it, but to what purpose? Could it give any comfort when I shrieked in physical pain or was transfixed by a mental bitterness? With what stony indifference it remained unmoved when time and tide drifted me out of it! I had loved a doll but it flew away on a breeze. The sweet cakes I had licked never stuck to the tongue. I am now where I am, in spite of and without them all, yet I am making myself miserable by projecting my thoughts back to them or to similar things I look forward to ahead. None of them is found on scrutiny to possess anything which could or can give any soothing happiness that can endure; none of them lasted longer than a sparkle, a phantom or a bursting bubble. And yet each one brought pain, lassitude, regret, burning, a bruise or a wrench that cut into me. Their absolute hollowness, utter insignificance and awful transience appear naked when, freeing myself from their intoxication, I look back on and examine them from different angles. And so I must not let them tickle me again. I would not let their memory haunt me or make me look out again for them. As I am actually and physically cut off from the past and the future, so I must cut off my thoughts from things of the past and of the future. And then I shall be able to sing and dance on in the current of time, my mind

unfixed to anything, as the ripples do in the flowing stream. Unfixing my mind from anything behind or ahead, which is the same thing as fixing it right on the immediate moment, is essentially *yogic Nirvana*. It is that which takes me beyond all swayings and swervings of the mind, from causes which produce feelings of joy and sorrow, hopes and disappointments. Good and evil, pleasure or pain—they are not really in anything, but they enter a thing when it is held in an unreal frame on one side of which is the past that is not real now and on the other the future which, too, is all unreal. Placed between such unrealities on either side the Present becomes gloomy and overshadowed. Realization of this is the simple means to the End I am after. Whenever an agitation comes, a desire pricks, or a memory cuts, let the cause be dissected and examined and then its unreality will be exposed. And the mind will then withdraw into the Present and be steadied and harmonized there. For such analysis and judgment no phraseology is required. My own experience guides me and my growing wisdom convinces me. To escape from *maya, moha,* illusions and misery-causing pursuits, we have to pull the mind back, when distracted, to the Present; and this pulling back becomes easy when we look through to the other side of the false charm and glitter of the distracting things. On looking through to the other side the mind itself recoils from pursuit, and gradually the habit is formed of turning back whenever the mind is displaced from its present setting, till it laughs at any breeze that comes to blow it. This is the state of *Sat-Chit-Ananda,* of Eternal Bliss, of *Nirvikar* or imperturbable Concentration.

J. M. GANGULI

Art is a beautiful way of telling the truth.

What is denied cannot be rectified.

Trust is triumph; Trust is tribulation.

AVOR

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

CÉCILE PÉRIN

[We are indebted to our good friends **Madame Andree Karpeles and M. C. A. Hogman** for this very interesting and informative contribution on this distinguished French poet.—Ed.]

The Legion of Honour has just been awarded to Cécile Périn; her numerous admirers did not have to wait for this formal recognition, however, to know her as one of the most gifted amongst modern French poets of classical tendencies.

Probably no anthology, either French, Belgian or Canadian, is without some poem of hers. Several musicians, inspired by the harmony of her verses and the ethereal lightness of her touch, have composed accompaniments to Cécile Périn's poems. But her talent does not only charm us: a deep meaning is hidden between the lines. Some poems which at first seem only descriptive lift, in their last lines, the curtain leading to the Unknown, the Infinite, the Divine. They also convey to us the poet's soul: her deep love of peace, her desire for mutual understanding, her generosity, which have won her many unknown friends.

From different parts of France, climbing the steps of her dark and narrow stairs, friends land in her simple den, high above the turmoil of Cannes, to express their admiration to this winner of many awards from the Académie Française (amongst them the highest one given to poets: the Prix National de Poésie, in 1914). But Cécile Périn's glorious halo is invisible and need not scare the shy visitors: here she is, this great poetess, as simple as can be, not solemn but quick, witty, vivid and young, though several times a great-grandmother! Not only in spirit is she endowed with eternal youth, but seems so in body as well. A passionate lover of nature, she roams about in vast landscapes, yet never overlooks the smallest wild flower, the least sound:—

I look towards nature
With eyes forever overwhelmed
I delight in a murmur
And listen to the lamb's bleating,
I drink at the pure sources
Of starry mirages...

Thus sings Cécile Périn in one of her last poems in *A Room Opened on the Sky* (*Une Chambre Ouverte sur le Ciel*) (Divan, Paris. 1953). Though written during an illness, these poems are illuminated by the splendour of hope, the light of resignation:—

My soul, mixed in each landscape,
Seeks for the divine sense of all that moves it.

In dream, the soul meets
The Sage on the Ganga's shore.

From all the nests hidden in your past
Arises the hymn which of yore seemed wonderful,
But you hear nought, except the poignant silence
Of the soul talking to God.

The sorrows of the great poet, Alfred de Vigny, prompted him to revolt and to write in his "Moïse" those famous, desperate lines:—

O God, Thou hast made me powerful and lonely,
Let me sleep forever in the slumbering earth.

On the contrary, Cécile Périn, in spite of the inevitable sorrows of a long life, is thankful for her destiny; she says in the volume *La Coupe*:—

Fate, thou hast blessed me with womanhood
Weaving my tender arms into a cot,
Allowing me to love all beauty you created
And to burn and to throb like a flame.

We also read in the same volume that discreet lesson:—

You who know that each minute
Life escapes your throbbing heart
And your eyes, where light and shade struggle,
Dream, but do not fall asleep.

The following verses, taken from the booklet *Penelope* (Savel, Paris. 1950) illustrate well the characteristics of the author and the way she has of widening a passing impression:—

SMALL BELLS

Hark! to the small bell dancing
Round the lamb's neck;
In cadence the sound of bells
From another flock
Answers, yonder,
Just like an echo
In the far away hills.

Hark! I sing
In the dark, and sometimes
My soul delights
In hearing, from an invisible
Shore far beyond,
The voice of an attentive soul
Coming towards me.

The volume *Mélodies* (Ophrys. 1943) shows how much the horrors of war tortured the peace-loving poet:—

ADORATION

Never, as in these days of terrible slaughter,
Have we understood the sacredness of life,
Of the slightest life, humble, dull, almost invisible,
That the sun bathes with its golden gleams.

I dislike to pick either leaves or flowers,
I won't hurt any more the young sprouting stems
And I'll walk lightly on the road, for fear
Of destroying some small fly dancing.

CREDO

Between the world and you runs a river of fire,
A lake of mud spreads its pestilence beyond,
In the infernal turmoil where your spirit is roaming
The angel's hymn vibrates no more.

During the former war (1914 to 1918) Cécile Périn had written many poems inspired by her horror of violence; they appeared in 1919 under a title full of meaning: *Les Captives* (Sansot, Paris):—

We are here as in a prison
Motionless in our homes
Knowing that the men are dying.

We have seen it pass, the terrible train
Of Death and Captivity,
Old men dying, children used as targets,
Martyred or mutilated.

After having suffered from the invasion and the destruction of her native town, Reims, and from the death of a younger sister killed in a bombardment, she writes:—

We have listened to too many death rattles
From the depths of blood-stained evenings,
Not to remain trembling and pale
At the threshold of happiness returning.

She is indignant at the selfishness of those who "ignore":—

And you sleep in peace. And you don't feel
Weighing on your forehead the distress of the world.
And you eat in peace. And you don't hear
The lamentations which, from the deep darkness
Arise, ascend and die. And you don't see
These thousands of dark holes: the newly dug graves.

In a hymn to Peace she says:—

Shall we once more forget that You resume everything,
That You are the vivid soul, and the aim and the cause?
Kneeling each evening, shall we again utter Your name,
O Peace, deep rhythm of creatures and of things?

And so the poet's revolt, stronger than all her other feelings, expresses itself at the end of the book:—

Dumb women of all countries
What are they pondering about?
Those from whom the war has stolen
Happiness? Women watching,
Women of all countries,
Is the voice choked in your throats
When your men, when your sons
Are mutilated or condemned to slaughter?

Amongst the twenty volumes or so of Cécile Périn's production one must cite: *La Féerie Provençale* (1930), dedicated to the beauty of Provence, to its sun and its tropical vegetation; *Finistère* (1924); *Océan* (1920); and we must not overlook to mention *Images, Regards Vers L'Aube* and *Bretagne* (1951), in which she paints austere, grey and melancholy landscapes with

a delicacy reminding us of Japanese prints. There is also a series of booklets which one might call poems of the home.

If Victor Hugo excelled in *The Art of Being a Grandfather*, as he entitled one of his books dedicated to his granddaughter, Jeanne, Cécile Périn delights in the art of being a mother, a grandmother, and even a great-grandmother! In *Vivre* (1906), *Les Pas Légers* (1907), *Variations du Cœur Pensif* (1911), *La Pelouse* (1914), and in her most recent book, *Paroles à l'Enfant* (1955), she not only sings the joys of maternity but the silent dramas that often underlie family life; she murmurs to her daughter:—

> Sadness to be unjust, to be a woman
> Lacking in simple and kind balance
> And to have, sometimes, without reason
> Bruised the crystal of your soul.

The volume one can reread with an ever renewed emotion is *Offrande* (1933), dedicated to the memory of her husband, the painter Daniel Réal. Rarely has a deep love, an harmonious understanding, been depicted with such classical simplicity; the second part of the book entitled *Ténèbres* (darkness), reveals the despair following the loss of the beloved.

Offrande is the book of Cécile Périn which ought to appeal the most to the women of India, because it has an eternal, a universal sound; it would find an echo in their souls, because they have been and are still the embodiment of true womanhood.

ANDREE KARPELES and C. A. HOGMAN

A Comparative Study of Pratimoksa. By W. PACHOW. (The Sino-Indian Cultural Society, Santiniketan. 219+34 pp. 1955. Rs. 12/-)

Pratimoksha is the cord that binds and holds together the community of Buddhist renunciants. Buddhism being in origin and intent a monastic religion, *Pratimoksha* is of supreme importance. But it has undergone a series of changes during the long history of Buddhism, as also in the course of its pilgrimage in various countries. Dr. Pachow has, in this volume, made an interesting comparative study of the *Pratimoksha* literature in the Pali, Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan records.

Taking the Sarvastivada text as the standard (of which is given a complete rendering in English), probably owing to his familiarity with it, the author considers the Pali, Dharmagupta, Mahishasaka, Kashyapiya, Mahasanghika, Mahavyutpatti and the Tibetan texts. Prefacing the book is a scholarly, if somewhat confused, account of the meaning of *Pratimoksha*, the evolution of various texts and the development of Buddhist rules from the earlier Brahmanical ones.

But Dr. Pachow's arguments refuting the claims of the Pali record as the oldest (p. 35), in favour of the Sarvastivadin, are not very convincing. It is surprising that the author has neglected the significant Pali expression, "*Patimokkhasamvarasamvuto*," which alone conveys the real meaning of *Pratimoksha*. "*Sanghavasesa*," on p. 38, must be "*Sanghadisesa*," as it comprises a set of rules requiring a *Sanghakamma* at the beginning (*adi*) as well as at the end (*sesa*).

The volume indicates the work of a keen and patient scholar, and the Cheena Bhavana of Santiniketan must be heartily commended for this excellent publication.

S. K. RAMACHANDRA RAO

Jataka Tales: Birth Stories of the Buddha. Retold by ETHEL BESWICK. Foreword by DR. E. CONZE. Frontispiece by SHRIMATI ARNAKALI E. CARLILE. (Wisdom of the East Series. John Murray (Publishers), Ltd., London. ix+105 pp. 1956. 8*s.* 6*d.*)

This is a "must" book for more reasons than can be listed, though the primary one may well be that it presents the transmigration of souls doctrine in an original, simple and highly imaginative manner. There are 547 Jataka Tales, told by the Buddha of his previous births as bird, animal, man, from which Miss Beswick has selected thirty-five, reduced them in length and simplified their presentation. Particular attention is invited to the author's Introduction, which contains, *inter alia,* an admirable summary of the Buddha's life, and the cardinal tenets of his doctrine.

Incidentally, there is a "correspondence" between the opening of the great fairy tales of the West—"Once upon a time"—and the opening of each Jataka Tale—"Once the life that was to become the Buddha was born as a. . . ."

A high tribute which can be offered to this book is that these Tales would have instant appeal to children (assuming that they have not been corrupted by some Comics, and certain aspects of T.V.) because, to childhood, all is magic and nothing, therefore, is surprising—consequently the conception that the Buddha was formerly a sprite, a quail, a lion, etc., would instantly be acceptable.

It is interesting, as stated in the Introduction, that the Buddha's favourite disciples frequently appear as friends in these Tales, while his cousin, Devadatta, who often attempted to destroy him, is cast for the role of "villain." (It will be remembered that Dante, in the *Divine Comedy*, elevates his friends and castigates his foes.)

It is also interesting that, with the seeming inconsistency to be found in great myths, "The Obedient Elephant" tale presents the Buddha's favourite disciples and Devadatta in human form, while the Buddha appears as a white elephant of transcendent beauty. This tale, and "The Crocodile and the Monkey," and "The Marsh Crow," have particular appeal to one reader because they reveal, very effectively, how the Buddha's potential perfection created envy, even before he assumed human form, in his enemy, Devadatta.

The "lives-long" animosity of Devadatta is strikingly revealed in "The Crocodile and the Monkey" and it is dramatic that what occasioned the telling of this story by the Buddha was yet another attempt by Devadatta to destroy him.

The circumstances which prompted the telling of each Tale are stated before narration begins. One reader finds the circumstances which prompted the telling of "The Marsh Crow" of particular interest. The Brothers of the Order visited Devadatta and, on their return, the Master asked Sariputta how Devadatta had greeted him. Sariputta replied that Devadatta had *imitated* the Buddha and thereby come to grief.

The Buddha then narrates that when he was a crow named Viraka, and Devadatta was a crow named Savitthaka, the latter had imitated him with dire results. Savitthaka had envied the manner in which Viraka caught fish. Viraka warned him that he did not belong to the marsh crows and that therefore he could not enter the water in the requisite manner. Savitthaka ignored this warning—and was drowned.

Probably, however, it is idle to indicate personal preference in these thirty-five Tales, because each reader will inevitably discover his own favourites.

The great value of this book is that it brings to those who are not scholars some of these unique Tales. For those who are scholars, the six volumes, published by Cambridge University Press, to which the author acknowledges her

debt, are available.

After the death of the Buddha, "representations of the stories were carved on stone or painted on rock, as on the gates of the great Sanchi *Stupa*. . . . Also at the Bharhut *Stupa* and the Ajanta Caves."

These deceptively simple-seeming Tales are variations on the theme of Karma. They reveal how each life is, inevitably, the result of the good and the evil aspects of former lives. These Tales subtly indicate the most mysterious interrelationship which links all that lives, suffers and seemingly passes away—that most mysterious relationship between things apparently most incongruous: between man, beast, star and dew-drop.

This is a "must" book for more reasons than have been listed.

CLAUDE HOUGHTON

Jataka-Katha-Sandoho (Selections from the *Jatakas*). Edited with Introduction and Notes by N. K. BHAGWAT. (International Book House, Ltd., Bombay. xxiv+60+48 pp. 1955. Rs. 3/-)

Professor N. K. Bhagwat has been doing meritorious work for the cause of Pali in India. More than ten splendid volumes have been brought out under his editorship in the Pali-Devanagari Texts Series of the Bombay University. They all alike illustrate his editorial efficiency and erudition.

The volume under consideration is the third edition of a work published in 1928. The editor has selected eleven of the best of the Jataka tales, illustrated in the Bharhut and Sanchi sculptures, and has edited them with copious and valuable Notes, along with a scholarly Introduction. Very interesting for students of the *Ramayana* is the "*Dasarathajataka*" (pp. 16-21); extremely touching is the fine story told in the "*Candakinnarajataka*" (pp. 21-25); lofty morality is illustrated in the "*Sivajataka*" and in the "*Chaddantajataka*."

S. K. RAMACHANDRA RAO

The Art of Indian Asia: Its Mythology and Transformations. Vol. I: Text; Vol. II: Plates. By HEINRICH ZIMMER; completed and edited by JOSEPH CAMPBELL. (Bollingen Series XXXIX. Pantheon Books, New York. xxiv+468 pp. 614 Plates and 48 Text Plates. 1955. Price not mentioned.)

With the issue of these two sumptuous volumes, Professor Joseph Campbell's great task of completing and editing the English works of Professor Heinrich Zimmer (1890-1943) has been well accomplished. These works, it may be recalled, are: *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization* (1946), *The King and the Corpse* (1948), *Philosophies of India* (1951) and the present, *The Art of Indian Asia* (1955). "The four publications," Professor Campbell observes, "are facets of a single vision and constitute, practically, a single work."

This work is a good illustration of the traditional German thoroughness and may well serve as a model to be

followed by future writers on the subject of art, so far as the planning, references, cross-references, charts, maps, appendices, indices, choice of illustrations, etc., are concerned. The printing and production leave nothing to be desired.

The subject is one on which scores of good books already exist, and fresh ones are appearing every now and then, both in India and abroad. The chief merit of the work under review, however, lies in its comprehensiveness, coupled with the excellence of its illustrative plates—the photographic reproductions are marvellous indeed! The profusion of illustrations and the order in which they are presented are such that one can gain a fair idea of the essentials as well as of the evolution of Indian art from its very inception by merely looking at those illustrations, one after another, in the given order, without turning to the text.

Beginning from the art-objects of the Harappa culture (3,000 B.C.), the writer has noticed the whole range down to the present-day productions of plastic art, with the stamp of India, found within India proper or in the countries, such as Ceylon, Burma, Java, Bali, Champa (Annam), Cambodia, Thailand , Tibet, Chinese Turkestan and the Far East, that were in ancient days influenced by Indian culture. Pakistan, it need hardly be pointed out, is included in India proper in the present context. This justifies the title *The Art of Indian Asia.*

The periods into which the distinctive phases in the evolution of Indian art are divided follow the familiar arrangement, dynastic as well as regional: the Indus Valley Civilization (we had better call it Harappa culture), Vedic and Pre-Mauryan, Mauryan, Shunga, Andhra, Kushana, Gupta, and so forth.

The author has taken pains to explain the sculptural details against the background of the mythology or legends concerned, with much understanding, though statements like the one referring to the Vedas, Brahmanas and Upanishads as "the religious works of the Aryan *herdsmen*" (italics reviewer's) cannot but hurt the susceptibility of the Hindus. Besides, such pronouncements as this are premature:—

> During the earliest centuries of their occupation of the Gangetic plain, however, they [*i.e.*, Aryans] seem to have made no contribution whatsoever to Indian art: in any case, they have left no visible signs.

For how many ancient sites in the Gangetic plain have till now been subjected to archæological exploration and excavation? We must wait and watch.

Some of the identifications have since been discarded in favour of new ones, but the work has obviously not taken notice of such cases. Take, for instance, the relief of Bhaja, depicting a man riding an elephant. It has now conclusively been shown to represent the victorious King Mandhatri, whereas our author follows the earlier view according to which it is "Indra on his elephant Airavata." (p. 223; Plate 42).

It may further be observed that some of the Sanskrit terms have been inaccurately transliterated, though obviously the editor has taken great pains in using diacritical marks. In some cases, the errors do not make much difference, but in others the meaning is entirely changed. *Anāthapiṇḍāda* for *Anāthapiṇḍada* is one such. The most offensive is perhaps *Maithuna* for *Mithuna.*

These blemishes are, however, minor and do not detract much from the excellence of the work, which is bound to remain a standard work for long. India naturally figures in it much more prominently than the Asian regions enumerated above, about which detailed information must be sought elsewhere.

B. CH. CHHABRA

American Literature and the Dream. By FREDERIC I. CARPENTER. (Philosophical Library, New York. 220 pp. 1955. $4.75)

The author tells us that this book began as a series of essays, an interpretation of the major American authors, until he was struck by the idea that American literature has differed from English literature because of the constant and omnipresent influence upon it of the American Dream. The book is an attempt to illustrate this afterthought.

Although many will not be disposed to agree with either the premise or the conclusion, they would agree that the literature of a country expresses or reflects its ideals and aspirations, or that, in a broader sense, its literature may be regarded as a country's conscience. A very clear instance is supplied by the English literature of the nineteenth century. We have first the literature inspired by the French Revolution and then the literature of protest against the evils and ugliness of the Industrial Revolution. There may be no very clearly dreamed English "dream" in it, but there is a clearly enough discernible English conscience in it.

Mr. Carpenter first defines the American Dream. It is as old as the Pilgrim Fathers, though the name is recent—"that dream of a better, richer, and happier life for all our citizens of every rank," a sort of ideal Democracy. Stated thus, there is nothing specifically American about it. The author, however, seeks to differentiate the American Dream by pointing out that, whereas earlier European versions had located the dream world in Eden or Heaven or Utopia, the American dream was the hope of realizing the "kingdom of God" in America. This sounds perilously like Isolationism. Certainly, at one time America did represent to Europe something approaching this—witness Goethe's cry of protest against this view, echoed by Carlyle: "Here or nowhere is your America."

The nineteenth century, says the author, was the great age of the dream of an ideal American Democracy freed from European shackles, the age of Emerson and Whitman. What he fails to emphasize is that it was also the age of the most heroic act of the young American people, when it plucked and cast forth from its bowels the evil of slavery which had vitiated the Dream from the start. This accounts for a vital omission in his roll-call of honour: the writers who strove for Abolition. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* does not find a mention even in a footnote, and Lincoln is only referred to, as it were, in passing. And if William Saroyan is to find a place in the gallery of Dreamers, as a champion of American "self-reliance," one wonders by what logic Mark Twain is denied a chapter.

The book in fact attempts to study the attitudes of a dozen or so outstanding American writers to what the author calls the American Dream: Emerson and Whitman as the great champions; Hawthorne and Melville as the genteel opponents; Sinclair Lewis as a waverer; Eugene O'Neill as the romantic quester of the Dream as Beauty and as a satirist of the ugliness of reality; Thomas Wolfe as the completest embodiment; John Steinbeck as the intellectual apologist; and William Saroyan as a popular representative of the Will to the Fulfilment of the Dream.

In a case like this, arguments regarding omissions and interpretations will be endless. But I should like to point out a fundamental error. "... all books," says the author, "are eventually weighed for their content of wisdom." He therefore insists that a novel must also be judged by standards other than those of art, citing in his support Aristotle's dictum that poetry should be a more philosophical thing than history! This is not only to misunderstand Aristotle, but also to make a wrong approach to art.

The author has certainly indicated a very interesting point of view. The

Dream, I think, needs to be restated; the philosophers, who crowd out the writers, should be relegated to footnotes or appendices; and in their place we should have more of the great writers who dreamt the good dream in their own ways.

G. C. BANNERJEE

Sri Aurobindo's Savitri: An Approach and a Study. By A. N. PURANI. (Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 393 pp. 1956. Rs. 10/-)

In this revised and considerably enlarged edition of a book that first appeared in 1952, Shri Purani has covered all the three parts of *Savitri*, whereas the earlier edition had confined itself only to Part I.

The "fable" of Savitri is superficially the same as that of the episode of "Savitri and Satyavan" in the *Mahabharata*. The childless king, Aswapathy, after undergoing prolonged austerities, becomes the father of a girl, Savitri. In due course she marries Satyavan, although warned that he would die in a year's time. When the fatal moment comes, Savitri follows Yama, the God of Death, pleads with him till at last he grants her wish, and so Satyavan lives again. It is a wonderful story, illustrating both the power of *tapasya* and the power of Love.

Sri Aurobindo, however, has grafted on to the old legend a profound symbolical meaning. Aswapathy's *tapasya* is verily "an epic climb of the human soul" from insensate material life to a vision of the highest possibilities of supramental life. He asks, not just for a daughter, but rather for the descent of Divine Grace in human form in order to realize on earth the possibilities he has already glimpsed.

Shortly before her moment of destiny, Savitri looks into herself, tears away veil after veil of appearance, and sees her true Self at last and recognizes her Mission. When death overtakes Satyavan, she is thus able to face Yama, not to plead with him, but to withstand his tempting offers, make him retreat in discomfiture and so end his empire on earth. Now Savitri and Satyavan are the first of the new supramental race, dedicated to the task of transforming terrestrial life, with its limitations and obscurations, into the Life Divine.

Sri Aurobindo has fused the legend and the symbol into a marvellous epic unity; but the average reader is likely to be scared away, not only by the enormous bulk of the poem, but also by the several Books of Yoga which describe phenomena other than those of our everyday humdrum experience. It is here that Shri Purani's annotations and commentaries are so invaluable. While *Savitri* was in progress Shri Purani enjoyed for many long years the daily companionship of Sri Aurobindo and accordingly his exposition of the æsthetics, metaphysics and spiritual nuance of the poem can claim unrivalled authority. For prospective readers of *Savitri*, therefore, Mr. Purani's book will prove an indispensable introduction and a reliable and enthusiastic guide.

K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

Reflections on Hanging. By ARTHUR KOESTLER. (Victor Gollancz, Ltd., London. 193 pp. 1956. 12*s*. 6*d*.)

One of Arthur Koestler's illustrious predecessors in literature "wrote like an angel and talked like poor Poll." Arthur Koestler in *Reflections on Hanging* writes at times divinely and at times like "poor Poll"—badly repeating what has been better said by others. He discourses on motivation and fear, as Margery Fry did before him, in a learned and thoughtful chapter, seeking to show how little responsibility any of us have

for our actions, how many other influences are at work in all our lives and how even fear would not prevent us from doing the things we were conditioned to do. All this he applies with sympathy to murderers to show how little they can be affected by deterrent sentences or threats.

Unfortunately he allows no such thoughts of conditioning and training in the predetermination of the attitude of judges and law-makers towards murder and the death penalty. It is a weakness of his judgment, and that weakness spoils the book. It has many careless errors of fact, some exaggerations of emphasis, much hasty and slipshod writing as though, suddenly enlisted in the ranks of the abolitionists, he must pour out all he knows and feels. In this respect, this book plays into the hands of the defenders of the death penalty and justifies some of the things they like to say about abolitionists.

Yet the book has behind it Arthur Koestler's own experience of imprisonment and of being condemned to death. From this stems great emotion and feeling, sympathy with the oppressed and hatred of all who represent oppression.

It is not a book to quote or use as a textbook; it is a book to read and be stirred by.

FRANK DAWTRY

Twilight of the Maharajas. By SIR KENNETH FITZE. (John Murray, Publishers, Ltd., London. 180 pp. Illustrated. 1956. 15*s*.)

The title of this book is misleading. It is not, as one might have supposed, a study of the decline of the old Indian Princely order, although an innocuous "Post-Mortem" is added as the final chapter, but a relatively harmless little collection of reminiscences written by an ex-member of the Indian Political Service. Two quotations will suffice to sum up Sir Kenneth's approach to India, from which he retired in 1943. First, after a reference to the famous gathering of Princes for the Duke of Connaught's visit to Delhi in 1921, he adds:—

> With what scorn and incredulity would I have spurned the idea, had any bold prophet dared to voice it, that within little more than a quarter of a century and before my own connection with that Order had terminated, it would have reached the verge of extinction, or that the gorgeous palaces which the princes were being encouraged to erect for themselves at the Imperial Capital were destined to be diverted to the housing of the foreign ambassadors so soon to be accredited to an independent Indian republic!

Secondly, his description of the Residency at Indore in terms of an English village is charming in its *naïveté*, but unfortunate in its implications. An extract will have to suffice:—

> For the abode of the Squire there was the stately Residency with its pillared façade and stone balustrades glimpsed through parklike grounds from a *maidan* [or green]. . . . In one corner of the green the Residency Club nobly and convivially sustained the traditions of the English "local" . . . .

This, of course, gives the show away; for the nostalgia is not for India but for an England transplanted to India. In spite of these shortcomings which are found throughout the book and also of Sir Kenneth's incredibly archaic style (his successors are, however, no doubt, still writing like that up and down the corridors of New Delhi), in spite of the author's lack of imagination and of his obvious incomprehension at times (leaders of nationalist movements in Indian States are referred to, with no malice intended, as agitators), he emerges as a kindly, affectionate and basically honest and decent man, doing his duty conscientiously as, in his limited way, he sees it, and refreshingly free from arrogance, bad manners or false pride. I think Gandhiji would have respected him.

IAN LE MAISTRE

Khadi (Hand-Spun Cloth): Why and How. By M. K. GANDHI. (269 pp. 1955. Rs. 3/-); *My Religion.* By M. K. GANDHI. Compiled and edited by BHARATAN KUMARAPPA. (168 pp. 1955. Rs. 2/-); *Our Language Problem.* By M. P. DESAI. (216 pp. 1956. Rs. 2/8) (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.)

The publishers are to be congratulated on venturing on these three books at this critical time. The public mind is being exploited by vested interests, which is causing the unity of India to be disturbed.

It is well worth studying the very many aspects of the problems which now baffle solution. Recognition of the place of Khadi as a definite aid for unifying India seems to have gone into the background, while industrial planning in the Second Five-Year Plan arrests the attention of the public. The non-sectarian nature of independent India seems to have aroused the displeasure of communalistic bodies like the Hindu Maha Sabha and the Muslim League; and their leaders, unconsciously or otherwise, try to inflame passions to cloud real issues. The States Re-organization Commission, which was mainly intended to solve the linguistic problem, brought on by its Report a spate of mob violence, and it is not known what effect the awaited Report of the Language Commission will bring.

If the people who often profess to respect the views of Mahatma Gandhi on the above subjects would follow his advice, many of the ugly happenings stirred up by interested groups would be avoided.

Has Khadi been driven into the background? Has its mission failed? Is it understood that the dedicated workers of the All-India Spinners' Association could revive and reconstruct our villages? A concise record has been compiled in this book from articles written by Gandhiji in *Young India* and in *Harijan* and from his recorded speeches and conversations, which require to be very carefully studied. There are clear indications to show that, as the editor states, Khadi was not merely a political weapon but "a non-violent economic and social order which would bring peace and happiness both to us and to all mankind." Gandhiji was of the opinion that industry could not provide work for the masses but that Khadi could give work even to the poorest man. He exhorts Khadi workers to go to the villages and lay the foundations for an economic self-sufficiency.

In *My Religion* Mahatma Gandhi is quoted as having stated that his religion was ancient Hinduism, the religion of his forefathers, not the orthodox system called Hinduism; he called it "my Hinduism" and he assimilated and synthesized into his conception the spirit of all other religious systems. If one carefully analyzes Hinduism, which usually baffles attempts at a definition, it can be seen that within it all concepts from rank atheism to belief in the Supreme Oneness are included and each one is left free to think and choose what is best for him. In this sense religion is indeed personal. The fact that India has been made a secular State has aroused some passion, but this does not mean or prove that it is either irreligious or non-spiritual.

Shri M. P. Desai in *Our Language Problem* has discussed many aspects of the language controversy. In India, one has to learn the State language, Hindi, a regional language and English, the international language. The latter, which was first encouraged for cultural reasons, and also thrust on us by alien rule for administrative ends, has taken root and a percentage of the educated population still cling to it. All the three languages seem to be essential and the author prays that the problem, being great and important, be decided wisely and with dignity, as no rigid enforcements are advisable and solutions to it should grow with the nation's aspirations.

All those who wish well for India should seriously study these three books. They should work in villages, to create public opinion by educating the masses, instead of wasting their energies by working for emoluments and preferments in public services. These books are precious national heirlooms. They are ably edited and well printed.

N. RAMABHADRAN

Hindustani Samajiat. By JAFAR HASAN. Urdu. (Anjuman-e-Taraqqui-e-Urdu (Hind), Aligarh. 263 pp. 1955. Rs. 4/8)

Dr. Jafar Hasan, who obtained his Doctorate in Sociology in 1925 from the University of Heidelberg, has been the Head of the Department of Sociology of the Osmania University since the year 1928. He has the proud distinction of having completed a trilogy on sociology and now he is busy in making ready an English-Urdu Social Scientific Dictionary and an Explanatory Dictionary of Social Scientific Terms commonly used in the Humanities.

Hindustani Samajiat is undoubtedly a valuable contribution to Urdu literature in general and to sociology in particular. The book treats the subject of sociology with special reference to social life, social evils, problems of social uplift and social movements in India. It treats in a delightful style a complicated subject: the social life which has been influenced by different sets of people who came to India and settled down for good, considering her their homeland. The analysis bears witness to the deep study and knowledge of the author.

Dr. Hasan's association with the Hindustani Prachar Sabha has influenced the book in the coining of a number of simplified words and phrases, like *Nadesh* for *Hidayat*, *Bachchi Hatya* for *Tifle Kushi*, *Paidaliya* for *Papiadah*, and so on, as also in the simplification of the Urdu script and terminology.

Hindustani Samajiat, with its matter-of-fact style and up-to-date manner, must have a place in all well-equipped libraries.

N. S. GOREKAR

Srijnaneshvaracharitam. By KSHAMA ROW; English translation by LEELA RAO DAYAL. Sanskrit. (N. M. Tripathi, Ltd., Bombay. 40+44 pp. 1955. Rs. 4/8)

To lovers of Sanskrit it is saddening to note that this is the very last work of a genius who brought a new life and a new vision into Sanskrit literary forms during recent times. Pandita Kshama Row wrote not only the greatest Sanskrit epic of our times, on the life of Gandhiji, but gave poetical biographies of saints like Mira, Tukaram and Ramdas, besides fascinating plays, stories and sketches. The gifted poetess relieved Sanskrit literature from the blight of academism which had reigned for centuries, and found inspiration from great lives, present as well as past. With a consummate metrical craftsmanship and a flawless command over Sanskrit, she could recapture the classical simplicity and grace of the ancient masters and demonstrate how living Sanskrit can yet exercise a nation-wide appeal, beyond the narrow circle of dons.

The present work is in a line with her other works singing of saints. Its theme is the life of Sri Jnaneshvara, invested with a halo of mystery and miracle by popular legend. We have here a vivid presentation of the decadent Brahmin society of the twelfth century. The suffering it inflicted upon innocent members in the name of orthodoxy is movingly brought out; and the role played by Jnaneshvara and his brothers in bringing about the much needed social and religious reform is forcefully indicated. Fired by religious devotion as the poetess is, much of the

work is taken up with the miracles wrought by the saint, like the bison's chanting Vedic hymns, the corpse coming to life and the wall moving in mid-air. For those who do not believe in miracles, the theme will naturally appear fantastic. One feels that the saint's teachings could have been treated at greater length. A willing suspension of disbelief is thus rendered necessary for appreciating the work as a poem. Still, one cannot fail to enjoy the sweet music of its *upajati* measures and the unlaboured felicity of its Sanskrit diction. The limpid flow of verse throughout the eight cantos reveals a maturity of art recalling to us Ashvaghosha and Kalidasa. The style maintains a steady spontaneity without excessive cleverness.

In this posthumous publication, a few misprints have remained (*e.g.*, VI.15, VII.1), and there is a metrical lapse in the last quarter of I.2.

The book contains a valuable foreword by MM. Dr. P. V. Kane and a free English rendering by the daughter of the poetess. It would have been better if the rendering had been closer to the original.

K. KRISHNAMOORTHY

Leaders of Modern India. By P. D. TANDON. (Vora and Co., Ltd., Bombay. 159 pp. 1955. Rs. 2/8)

These pen portraits of twenty-one leaders bring out the strong individual traits of some of them by narratives of memorable episodes and incidents in their lives. Again, the writer attempts to quote the leaders' opinions on the problems and even on the trivial matters of everyday life. Because they are quoted in the leaders' own words, even some commonplace sayings acquire a certain value. One feels that some other leaders, who made substantial contributions in carrying forward India's struggle for freedom, should have been included in the book.

A book of this nature should have a literary rather than a journalistic style and diction. The author, being essentially a journalist, has not been able to disentangle himself from his normal way of writing. Consequently, there is journalistic jargon, and the chronic adjectival verbosity is at times irksome. For the same reason, some of his observations verge, unconsciously, on the offensive.

I do not think the author is quite correct in his assessment of Dr. Radhakrishnan (p. 129), that the secret of his greatness is only "hard and patient work."

SURENDRANATH TRIPATHI

The March of Civilization. By NOLINI KANTA GUPTA. (Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. 115 pp. 1955. Re. 1/8)

Nine previously published essays of Nolini Kanta Gupta have been brought together to form this small book. The first essay furnishes the title and indicates the thread of thought that runs throughout.

The purpose seems to be to aid the reader in getting a more integrated and synthetic viewpoint on natural and human evolution. The interdependence and ultimate unity of spirit and matter are brought out; and the system of Yoga taught by Sri Aurobindo is given as the means to learn higher truths and achieve higher consciousness.

There is much that is worth consideration in these essays and, as usual, the author is clear and to the point, bringing ancient and modern terms into helpful juxtaposition.

E.P.T.

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

[The paper which we publish here was the subject of an interesting Discussion Meeting held at the Indian Institute of Culture, Basavangudi, Bangalore, on June 21st, when the discussion following the reading of the paper was led by Dr. C. S. Pichamuthu, D.SC. (Glasgow), PH.D., F.G.S., Professor of Geology in the Central College, Bangalore.

The writer of the paper, **Mr. J. L. Forster** of Norwich, England, brings out forcibly in this article the threat to prosperity and even to human life from the advance of the earth's deserts along many fronts. The interdependence of the elements and the kingdoms of nature and the dependence of man on both has been too little remembered. Ignorance and misguided opportunism on the part of individuals and a *laissez-faire* attitude on the part of governments have in the past encouraged the spread of arid areas. Fortunately, many governments are now awake to the situation and prepared to do what can be done to check the deserts' advance before further irreparable damage is done. A hopeful augury was the holding of the International Scientific Conference on Deserts at Jerusalem in 1952. Many representatives of learned institutions throughout the world as well as of Unesco attended the Conference, held under the chairmanship of the Adviser to the FAO for Palestine. But adequate meeting of the situation demands not only scientific knowledge but also the acceptance of the Trusteeship of Wealth concept on a grand scale.—ED.]

THE WORLD'S DESERTS ON THE MARCH

The ravages of soil erosion all over this planet are, not surprisingly, arousing increasing concern. The general picture which emerges from many surveys is disquieting—a relentless advance of arid, desert conditions in four out of five continents. In North America, Africa, Asia and Australia the sands are waiting like wolves at the very doors of civilization, and every year they swallow great acreages of once fertile land.

Now from every quarter of the globe scientists are uttering grave warnings, and the most striking feature of these reports is their unanimity in placing the responsibility for the menace upon man himself. While soil erosion, due mainly to deforestation and to efforts to support larger herds and flocks than the land can safely carry, has been going on for centuries, modern tendencies appear to accelerate it to a point where loss of soil fertility leads to a rapidly declining standard of living.

Professor Shaler, American scientist, has outlined the stages of the gradual deterioration of the soil. Primitive man disturbed the soil no more than the lower animals, but in his first step upward he became a devastator. By exploiting the soil he deprives it of its protective covering, clearing virgin forests, burning off and over-grazing the herbage, and exhausting the humus, and

> each extension of civilization has widened the field of devastation, until nearly one-half of all the land is subject to its ravages. It is now a question whether human culture, which rests upon the use of the soil, can devise and enforce ways of dealing with the earth, which will preserve this source of life so that it can support the men of ages to come.

Messrs. Jacks and Whyte of Britain instance Palestine, where, in the hills, cultivation was once wide-spread and a high degree of development had been reached. Scrub forests and pastures were protected from over-grazing by wild animals and stock thieves. The extinction of these "beneficent" pests has resulted in destruction of the forest, loss of soil and drying up of springs. A village once surrounded by oak forests and called Umm el Fahn, "mother of charcoal," is now perched among bare rocks and has to buy firewood elsewhere. The effect of erosion on history and politics is indicated:—

The hill country comprises some 60 per cent. of the non-desert area of Palestine and could all be habitable and productive. It is in a ruinous state, and many slopes with high rainfall are devoid of permanent vegetation and practically denuded of soil. Such eroded land cannot, of course, support a settled population, and competition for the fertile areas which remain becomes intensified.

Fortunately, now the Israelis are replanting.

Professor Stebbing, who has travelled extensively studying the effects of erosion, declares that in Australia, America and Africa, so misleading a term as "drought" ought to be dropped, for the affected areas are in the intermediate state of progression to permanent desert conditions. Each year will see this stage progressing with greater intensity, until a point is reached at which arresting it becomes impossible.

Semi-desert conditions are brought about by misdirected tillage, artificial drainage, overcropping and lack of fertilizers, followed by over-grazing. With the excessive utilization of the soil the water supplies at first decrease, then become intermittent. During this latter stage the soil is made over to the stock-grazer, being no longer sufficiently productive for agriculture. Under excessive grazing and pasture, accompanied by fire, the vegetation is gradually reduced to the condition of open savannah, the rainfall disappears, the water level sinks lower in the subsoil, and the desert has advanced another stage.

Undoubtedly the improvident felling of forests is one of the most influential factors in the rapid desiccation of fertile soils. It is calculated that, with a given rainfall, over 56,000 pounds of soil is washed away per acre of bare ground every year to find a grave in the sea, where all it can do is to silt up harbours. The influence of forests on water conservation is now well established. Where trees flourish the water slowly oozes from the forest floor, flowing through the land and feeding the streams, keeping the ground moist and fertile. Where territory has been denuded of trees, the waters rush tempestuously into the valleys, causing floods and carrying huge amounts of soil with them. The slopes, moreover, robbed of their fertile soil, are hard to regenerate either by natural seeding or planting.

The exact relation of trees and rainfall is not so easy to define, but there is no doubt that climate and rainfall in many localities have been permanently and seriously affected by the destruction of forests and failure to replant. It is certain that forest areas lead to greater condensation in the case of sea winds and mountain mists. When rain clouds meet the column of warm air rising from a hot, bare tract of country, they rise and become thinner; but when they meet the cooler air over a forest they become chilled and tend to condense and fall as rain. Thus the preservation of forests acts as a vital factor in soil conservation—holding back the rushing torrents which would denude it; and conducing towards the precipitation of rain which prevents it from deteriorating into sand. From the engineer's point of view a forest is an elaborate mechanism for the control and absorption of rainfall.

There is ample confirmation of the fact that thousands of square miles of semi-desert country were once thickly forested or cropped. Every traveller in Asia and Africa has seen the ruins of once great cities which, when flourishing, were surrounded by fertile fields, but which are now in the heart of deserts. Timgad in North Africa and the sister city, Lambessa, are instances of such. They were busy and populous centres in Roman times, and it was once believed that the desiccation was the result of climatic changes, but there is no evidence of any catastrophic change of climate in North Africa in historic times.

A century ago travellers spoke of thick forests in North Africa where are now only parched wildernesses. The hinterland from which Carthage derived

its wealth was one of the most fertile regions of the Roman world—now it is mainly desert. Parts of Roman Africa, particularly Cyrene and what is now Tripoli grew more wheat than Egypt. They were the granaries of the Mediterranean. It is believed that at one time the forests extended as far north as Khartoum, but now, as a contrast, there has been a decided expansion of the desert in the Nile Valley within living memory, and areas have been abandoned to the ravages of the sand. Much of this loss is due to the unrestricted immigration of the camel-owning nomads with goats, who displaced the agriculturalists by destroying the pastures where sheep and cattle grazed. Camels and goats tear out vegetation by the roots and thus loosen the fertile soil, which is blown away from the land. Goats, indeed, have been called "the curse of Africa," for they breed prolifically, and eat not only grass, but bush, roots and bark. They are said to have destroyed the fertility of ancient Egypt and are now well on their way to repeating the triumph over the vegetation of Africa.

The danger of the Sahara to Africa is difficult to exaggerate. Professor Stebbing states that it is advancing on a front of 2,000 miles. A French authority, M. A. Loppinot, has estimated that for three centuries the desert has been advancing into what are now the French West African colonies and Northern Nigeria at the rate of a kilometre a year. Hundreds of square miles have been reduced to desert, and this loss is largely due to the destructive felling of forests and the wasteful practice known as "shifting cultivation." Where this is the rule a forest space is cleared and the site occupied for two or three years. Then the cultivator moves on, and leaves the space to the mercy of the desert. The only way to prevent the advance of the sand seems to be the planting of a great belt of forest to hold it back.

Conditions are equally acute in other parts of Africa. In a report by Sir Alan Pim on the finances of Kenya he stated that "the real problem of the future lies in the preservation and maintenance of soil fertility," more especially (though not only) in the native reserves, where "gradual destruction of the soil by unsound methods of cultivation and overgrazing is taking place."

Trouble arose in the Ukamba Reserve where the Government in one location failed to secure native co-operation in reducing the number of cattle. The reserve has a quarter of a million cattle, yet its carrying capacity is reckoned at only 20,000. In consequence pastures have been trampled and over-grazed to such an extent that grass has been killed, bare land exposed to the elements, and erosion in its worst and most rapid form has set in. Considerable areas of grazing have been completely denuded of cover and are rapidly passing beyond hope of recovery.

The more southerly parts of Africa are just as seriously affected. Drift sands are slowly making a wilderness of a large area on the coast of South-West Africa, 92,000 acres of valuable land having been covered already. The sand has been driven inland 80 miles in places and in some spots is piled 700 feet high. Erosion damage has reached so acute a stage in Basutoland that the Colonial Development Fund has made grants for the construction of anti-erosion works. The schemes involved the building of numerous conservation dams to arrest the spread of gulleys and to provide watering places for the stock.

Dr. Pole Evans, a Government expert, declared: "Unless vigorous measures are taken to preserve the grasslands of South Africa the country is doomed to become desert." Messrs. Jacks and Whyte record that erosion "has already transformed parts of South Africa's richest pastoral country into semi-desert," and obliged the Union Government to allocate more than £2,500,000 towards the cost of small

dams and earthworks built by farmers in three years. In the findings of a Drought Commission there is damning evidence of the responsibility of man for the rapid deterioration of large areas. It runs:—

> There is no evidence of any progressive increase or decrease in the rainfall of the Union during the historic period. The desiccation observable in many parts of the country is not due to diminished rainfall but to the failure of the land to absorb the rain as it falls, consequent on the destruction of the natural vegetation, the resulting erosion of the soil, and the hardening of the surface of the land by sun-baking and trampling of cattle.

Asia provides equally alarming examples of the rapid advance of the desert. Large areas of Mesopotamia, garden of the Old World Empires, are now sandy wastes, and in India many once fertile areas are now unprofitable. The report states that forests have shrunk and population grown with equal rapidity since the British occupation, and "today parts of India present a picture of man-made desolation without parallel, except perhaps in China."

This country, indeed, should be an example to the world. In the time of Ghenghis Khan (1162-1227) the now dreaded Gobi Desert pastured innumerable horses. Professor Chamberlain, addressing a conference of State Governors at Washington, spoke of the "pitiable struggle in China to retain and cultivate the scant remains of once ample soils," and of the "large tracts of almost bare soil, on which stand ruins implying former flourishing populations." Its more than 400 million people have been compressed into the small area of fertile land left, and it has been said that North China survives only because of the extraordinary natural freak of the loess soils. The loess, often 1,000 feet deep, a fine yellowish loam, spread all over Asia from Turkestan almost to the Yellow Sea, is believed to be a glacial deposit, a legacy of the Ice Age.

In Australia the problem of erosion is daily becoming more serious. A report issued by the Australian Council for Scientific and Industrial Research painted an alarming picture of the permanent destruction of grazing in parts, due to persistent over-stocking during long periods of partial drought. Stock-owners have made urgent representations to the Government that remedial measures be undertaken. Revelations regarding South Australian pastoral lands are painfully impressive because, in consequence of the destruction of edible trees and bush, the country is being ruined. In one area 3,000 miles of scrub are threatened and the farms are being blown away. Authoritative statements show that runs which formerly had 100,000 sheep have now only 30,000. A report presented to the Royal Society of South Australia states that 1,000 square miles which only recently were fair pastoral country are now desert and abandoned for good.

Mr. Sydney Upton, F.R.C.S., has warned the country of the menace and speaks of Australia's "Dying Heart." By over-grazing the soil is denuded of its protective covering of roots and grass. There is nothing to hold the soil together, and as vegetation diminishes the natural seed reserves become exhausted. Dwindling rainfall, coupled with an increasing drain on artesian water reserves, means that this precious asset is being lost. The scorching breath of the desert blights the land around, so that, as vegetation dies and aridity increases, the seas of sand extend their desolating sway, and the possibility of reclamation becomes more remote because the wind whirls away the top, once-fertile soil, leaving nothing but granite-like rocks.

Mr. Walter Bromhead, an agriculturist who travelled widely in Australia, New Zealand and Africa, bore witness to the deterioration in progress. In New Zealand he saw a newly ploughed field of rich but lava-like soil stripped of its topsoil in twenty-four hours by a windstorm just after it had been sown. He declares that a completely new technique, which includes the systematic

replanting of edible bushes and trees, is essential if the slight grazing value of semi-arid territories such as the Karroo and the salt or blue-bush areas is to be maintained or increased. He also utters a warning of the penalties likely to follow the tractor forms of wheat-mining becoming wide-spread in Norfolk and Hampshire. Such tillage is to a large extent responsible for the disaster that has overtaken gigantic areas of the New World. As a contrast to this "enlightened" modern farming, 200 years ago true husbandmen not only kept the heart in the soil but for generations steadily increased its fertility by wise rotation, animal traffic and adequate human industry.

Fortunately in Australia the Government has awakened to the urgency of the problem of reclamation, and a few years back the South Australian Minister of Lands was able to report valuable progress in the campaign to check soil erosion. Advantage was taken of the unusually copious rainfall to establish floral reserves, the Pastoral Board granting rent concessions to sheep-owners who do this and who stock their runs only lightly.

But the danger is not confined to continents, for the ultimate prosperity of Mahé, chief island in the Seychelles, is threatened through the ill-judged encroachments of agriculture, and the neighbouring island of Praslin is in the same plight. A century ago these islands, covering 40,000 acres, were covered with forest trees and a natural carpet of rich topsoil brought about almost entirely by them. Now, except for about 2,500 acres still under forest and largely belonging to the Crown, the rest of the area has given way almost completely to cultivation, and the topsoil, built up by nature in the course of centuries, has been washed away and has vanished, owing to soil erosion. If only the mountain ridges can again revert to forest cover all will be well for the Colony, for the rich soil will form again. An authority in the islands has written:—

> Here the woods on the hilltops must be regarded as the life springs of the Colony; all attempts to destroy them will have to be met by united action. It is a matter of life and death for the people. Touch the only few remaining forests on the hilltops and you tap the lifeblood of the people. If forest trees are cut down we shall see our natural subterranean reservoirs for the storage of water dry up, and Seychelles in a rainless interval will suffer untold miseries.

New Zealand has paid the penalty for the ruthless decimation of its timber which was allowed in the last century. Now the Government is carrying out a wide forestry programme and millions of acres of original forest have been declared reserved and cutting has been forbidden. Last century vast areas of bush were needlessly cleared so that pastures could be made. Yet much of the land was too poor to be farmed profitably. With the passing of the forest the rivers became silted and disastrous floods have occurred in the Dominion, while great stretches of country have been robbed of the fertile soil and have become useless for anything.

The danger in America is on the largest and most tragic scale. Those in closest touch with conditions in the great Dust Bowl of the central United States declare it is not scare-mongering to say the country is faced with a tragedy which will be without parallel in world history unless desperate efforts are made to stem the relentless advance of desert characteristics.

For nearly a century man recklessly wasted the marvellous fertility of the central States. Years ago far-seeing prophets, among them the first President Roosevelt, warned the nation of the danger ahead. Their warnings passed unheeded and now Nature is taking its revenge. Unprecedented droughts, catastrophic dust-storms, terrible floods and invasions by pests have devastated huge areas during the past half century and parts of Canada are almost as bad—

due to the felling of forests, the exhaustion of humus, over-stocking and failure to fertilize.

J. L. FORSTER

CORRESPONDENCE

PHILOSOPHY AND CULTURE

[The following note is prepared by **Dr. D. Gurumurti, M.A., Ph.D.**, retired Professor of Philosophy. It is a rejoinder to an article by Professor Joseph W. Cohen in *Philosophy East and West* for July 1955 which has just reached India. In this issue Dr. Charles A. Moore, Chairman, Department of Philosophy, University of Hawaii, and Editor of the Journal, answers Professor Choen. Two other articles appear in the same issue examining Professor Cohen's thesis : one is by Professor S. K. Saksena, Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Saugar, and the other by Professor Y. P. Mei, Professor of Oriental Studies in the State University of Iowa.—ED.]

In the issue for July 1955 of the journal *Philosophy East and West*, published by the University of Hawaii there appears a paper by Professor Joseph W. Cohen of the University of Colorado on "The Role of Philosophy in Culture"—contrasting the roles played by philosophy in the Orient and in the Occident. His immediate provocation for this outburst is the increasing trend among some philosophers of the Occident to advocate a fusion of the philosophies of the East and the West. He maintains that such a trend is not relevant to the basic actualities of the East and the West, and would result in accentuating the atmosphere of defeatism and tend to the abandoning of faith in reason. He chooses for his main target of attack the writings of Professor F. S. C. Northrop, whose work, *The Meeting of East and West*, has come in for his ire. He accuses Northrop of "incredible distortion and intriguing ingenuity," and of ignoring or explaining away whatever will not fit into his scheme. These very accusations can with better reason be levelled against Cohen's characterizations of Oriental Culture and Philosophy.

As Professor Charles A. Moore rightly points out in his Rejoinder, in the same issue, Cohen's paper repeats outworn *clichés* which were in fashion among Western thinkers in their attitude towards Eastern philosophy over three-quarters of a century ago and which have been repeatedly challenged and corrected by two generations of religious thinkers Eastern and Western, notable among them being Swami Vivekananda, Aurobindo Ghosh and Radhakrishnan. Phrases such as "chronic helplessness of life," "fatalism," "pessimism," "passive," "quietistic," "escapist," "tradition-dominated thought"—are all well-worn old terms which have been many times trotted out by ill-informed critics of Oriental philosophy and which finally have been given the quietus by a telling rebuttal by Radhakrishnan in his *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*.[1] This had resulted in better understanding and genuine appreciation of the contribution of Eastern philosophy and culture. Professor Cohen's views are a throwback to pet prejudices which were in vogue three-quarters of a century ago.

In the last century a series of translations of Oriental works on Philosophy and Religion were issued as the Sacred Books of the East edited by Professor F. Max Müller. The effect of their pub-

[1] See Chapter III.

lication was to open the eyes of Western thinkers to the priceless treasures contained in Eastern scriptures—witnesses to a high civilization and to high moral achievement. The propagandist Western missionary thought of the day underwent a modification in its attitude, realized the futility of aggressive propaganda which had earlier dismissed Indian faiths, philosophy and culture as "a mass of superstition and a sink of iniquity," and now regarded them as possessing virtues of their own.

> For a religious development existing over forty centuries and attaining spiritual heights which challenge ocmparison with the best products of their religions cannot be set aside as having no survival value.[2]

But the Western attitude still continued to be that the Christian civilization was the highest manifestation of the spirit and the moral standard for the human race, while every other system of thought, culture and religion was to be judged by it. After the first World War a further change in attitude took place. The Great World War was a testing time for Western "Christian" civilization. The bloodshed on a gigantic scale sanctioned by the Church leaders led to a mood of self-reproach. The sense of superiority melted away. The attitude changed from one of exploitation and domination to one of free partnership in the adventure of thought and culture by both the East and the West, which by contact and exchange achieves a new spirit and a new life. Professor Cohen reveals in his paper that there are still a few thinkers who have yet to make the transition to this third stage.

Cohen's monopolist claim for Western philosophy which he denies in the case of the East, that there is a continuous activity of thought directed upon the course of cultural development, a challenge and corresponding thought appearing, expressing themselves in art, religion and other social activities, cannot be sustained. A better acquaintance with the course of the cultural history of India could disabuse the minds of thinkers of Professor Cohen's type of this misreading of Indian history. Wherever there has been civilization there have been large movements of ideas in conflict with contemporary conditions, followed by a revision to a new upsurgence. Let us take two examples. The sixth century B.C. in India was an age of such ferment, when the two great spiritual personalities, the Buddha and Mahavira, led the revolt against the ritualist religion of the day and by example and precept established a new order of virtuous living as the greater objective. At the time of the Muslim occupation the national consciousness again received a challenge and responded to it by throwing up such great reformers as Guru Nanak and Kabir who preached the religion of devotion and worship of the One Supreme Being.

Professor Cohen's main contention that there is a constant harking back to the traditional thought in Oriental philosophy is not evidence of any lack of intellectual virility and vitality, but of the fact that all the thinkers of succeeding ages have at the summit of their philosophical achievement found that the bedrock of realization, the profound insight of the *Rishis* of the Upanishads, had been proved true by every generation of saints and seers down the centuries. This "*Philosophia perennis* with its *testimonium spiritus sancti*," understood by Aldous Huxley and other modern inquirers, is the common ground in the testimonies of the mystics in the West and the East alike. By a preoccupation with empirical values, with an exaggerated pursuit of activistic external life, the modern mind fights shy of the profound insights of seers everywhere, in all climes and times. To hark back to the fundamental insights as the result of fresh effort is no slavery to tradition. The ultimate truths

[2] RADHAKRISHNAN'S *East and West in Religion*, pp. 23-24.

of life can be rediscovered in each age and will be found to accord with the fundamental insights recorded in the Great Scriptures of the world. It is only a superficial mind mistaking novelty for progress that will condemn a whole course of thought in the Orient as sterile bondage to tradition.

Another major point in the attack by Professor Cohen is his reference to the current national activities in India and China which are influenced by Democratic Socialism and Communism, respectively. He feels that by going after social objectives these two nations have forsworn their historical moorings and embarked on "an assimilation of progressive and revolutionary Western Thought." This is again an attempt at misrepresentation. Readers of Nehru's works, notably *The Discovery of India*, will be struck by his deeply moral outlook and inner loyalty to the fundamental role of India among the nations of the world. Radhakrishnan and Aurobindo Ghosh, equally influenced by Oxford and Cambridge, have proved that the leaven of modern thought has only resulted in their reassertion of the validity of the fundamental insights of Indian thought and culture. To claim Gandhi as being influenced by Oxford and his non-violence as a passing exception is to be blind to the real significance of his life and work.

Cohen's attack on the "intensified stress on Oriental Philosophy" will, if it succeeds in its intention, only prevent the effort to bring to bear on the modern situation the philosophical insights most relevant to it from the past and present achievements of the Orient in thought and culture.

D. GURUMURTI

A POLITICIAN AND BUDDHISM

Mr. John Foster Dulles, the American Secretary of State, sent a message to all countries which were observing the 2,500th Anniversary of the Buddha. The *American Reporter* of June 16th gives its text:— ,

> The 2,500 anniversary of the founding of Buddhism is being celebrated this year throughout the world....
>
> I should like to take this opportunity to express the importance which our nation attaches to the recognition of the moral and spiritual values which alone can give significance to our lives and which must be the basis on which will be built the world of peace and justice which we all seek. We feel a sense of brotherhood with all people who adhere to such principles and welcome all occasions on which their essential importance is reaffirmed.

The affirmation of sympathy with moral and spiritual ideals and those who hold them is good, but it was not for intellectual assent that the Buddha, Jesus and other world teachers gave their injunctions. The Buddha's teaching of *ahimsa* (non-injury or non-violence) and that of Jesus to "resist not evil" were given as active principles, valid alike for individuals and nations. The Christ called upon men to love their enemies, as centuries before him Gautama had stated as the Law Eternal that hatred ceaseth not by hatred but by love. What great power in the world today is prepared to apply in practice these principles with all their implications?

E.M.H.

ENDS AND SAYINGS

"——————ends of verse
And sayings of philosophers."
HUDIBRAS

The interview with the Nobel Laureate, William Faulkner, which appears in *The Paris Review* for Spring 1956, under the title "The Art of Fiction," contains more than one important point on the art of writing and the writer's responsibility.

Among other things, Mr. Faulkner brings out that what is important is not the writer but what he creates; great writers have all written about the same things, for there remains nothing new to be said. The formula he gives for being a good writer is: "99% talent . . . 99% discipline . . . 99% work." The writer, he says, must never be satisfied with his work, but must ever aim higher, not just with a view to surpassing his contemporaries or his predecessors, but to do better than he thinks himself capable of. The writer's only responsibility is to his art; everything else has to go by the board; and the best environment for an artist is "whatever peace, whatever solitude, and whatever pleasure he can get at not too high a cost." A good writer is too busy writing something to have time to bother about success or getting rich—he "doesn't need economic freedom. All he needs is a pencil, and some paper" and three other things: experience, observation and imagination, "any two of which, at times any one of which, can supply the lack of the others."

Mr. Faulkner also discusses his own writing as well as his film work. He is of the opinion that nothing, such as working for motion pictures, can injure a man's writing if he is a first-rate writer.

When asked by the interviewer what technique a writer should use to arrive at his standard, his answer was:—

> There is no mechanical way to get the writing done, no short cut. The young writer would be a fool to follow a theory. Teach yourself by your own mistakes; people learn only by error. The good artist believes that nobody is good enough to give him advice. He has supreme vanity. No matter how much he admires the old writer, he wants to beat him.

Mr. H. S. Reiss, writing on "Kant and the Right of Rebellion" in the *Journal of the History of Ideas* for April, studies a paradox. Kant asserted the independence of the individual but denied man's right to rebel against established authority.

The eighteenth-century philosopher based his political theory on the principle of duty, viewing political history as "the story of the education of mankind towards freedom under law." Only law, he held, could give men freedom, equally limited for all. Revolution, in violating the law, violated the freedom of all and so degraded man's human dignity. But he insisted on the right of man to criticize the government publicly in writing. Even under a despotism permitting this, free thought could spread, eventually influencing the government to treat man "according to his dignity." Even if public criticism of the government was suppressed he counselled patience and acting as if the spreading of republican views, nature helping, could not be arrested.

But Mr. Reiss reminds us that Kant "could not have foreseen the modern totalitarian state." He interprets, not altogether convincingly, Kant's strictures on the denial of man's freedom as justifying not only passive disobedience, which it is suggested Kant approved,

but also efforts to overthrow a government which, like the modern totalitarian state, violates human dignity and freedom.

Totalitarianism and recent technological developments notwithstanding, we cannot accept with Mr. Reiss even the possibility of systematic and prolonged suppression of public freedom in all states. That there could be a "total suppression and perversion of truth on the whole globe" seems to us fantastic, as it would, surely, have seemed to Kant, in the light of the incalculable powers of the human mind and spirit! They have been shown forth by the world's truly great and must exist potentially in all.

Is "The Relation of Christianity to the Non-Christian Religions"—the subject of an unsigned article in *Main Currents in Modern Thought* (Port Chester, New York)—undergoing a change? The old bland assumption of superiority finds itself confronted by a new sense of dignity and importance in the East and in Africa. A consultation held in July 1955 at Davos, Switzerland, sponsored jointly by two departments of the World Council of Churches—those of Evangelism and of Missionary Studies—is hailed as indicating the beginnings of a wholly new programme for the evangelistic and missionary outreach of the Christian churches. The World Council of Churches reports its having offered enough material for self-examination and appreciation of the religion of others, etc., to "occupy the attention of the Christian churches, their ministers, missionaries and lay people 'on the frontiers,' for a very long time to come."

To look for a general early change in attitude among Christians to the non-Christian religions and the Christian approach to them would be unrealistic. Even the most tentative retreat from the old attitude—in so far as it is prompted by conviction and not by expediency—is, however, to be welcomed. It is a step not only towards better mutual understanding but also towards a potential spiritual enrichment too long needlessly foregone.

Analyzing editorially his country's loss of prestige since the end of World War II in his *Saturday Review* of March 17th, Mr. Norman Cousins traces it to misconceptions of America's real sources of strength. Her assumed superiority over Russia has proved to be false. Today we see Russia rising not only in the atom bomb but also in education and many other spheres. America's threatened loss of moral leadership does not depend on external factors but is closely linked to the fact that America has forgotten the sources of her strength. She has forgotten for what her country traditionally stands and what the word "America" has meant to millions outside that country. America's most important front, Mr. Cousins writes, is the moral front. She has stood for freedom, justice and the dignity of man. Americans built their great nation on the solid foundation of human diversity. America has had great ideals. But these great ideals will not sound relevant to the world if America is going to let ten billion dollars' worth of surplus food rot, while millions elsewhere are starving. America is going to sound relevant if she manifests to the world the moral strength which is her most precious asset. The ideals of America, like the sources of India's strength, do not have to be invented; they are only to be remembered and restored.